to be pitied for having to urge ideals that are being tried out on a tremendous scale in Russia today, whereas only a few thousand will take the trouble to read what he says. After they are through they will become all the more aware of their complete impotence to effect any change whatever in their own surroundings. So why should I subject myself to unnecessary strain to try to convince a small group of hopelessly complacent reactionaries that they are wrong when the only consequence of my attempt may be that I might have to remain without a livelihood?

I have also read through Irwin Edman's "The Contemporary and His Soul" which was sent to me by his father at his request. Edman himself is at present in Rome.

In a sense he tackles the same problem as Dewey but is far less direct and transparent in his ~~definition~~ definition and treatment of it. There is too much straining after literary effect. He does not forget himself in his argument. The result is that he merely grazes the surface whereas Dewey delves deep into the heart of the matter. "Individualism" is a much clearer and more pointed conception of what the modern man is after than salvation of the soul. It is only in a remote literary sense that it is proper to identify the yearning after a share in the world to come with yearning for effectiveness and security which is really uppermost in the mind of the modern man. The strange thing is that the thing Edman finally offers as a means of stilling the soul's hunger for salvation is what Dewey really insists on as the future means of satisfying our yearning for individualism, namely accepting the environment instead of seeking to escape it. Edman seems to have forgotten that essentially the scope of his inquiry is much wider than Dewey's. The problem he poses is not merely what shall man do in the here and the now to realize his individuality, but what

he do to transcend the fear of death? That transcendence is the only possible denominator common to the yearning for salvation on part of the ancient and of the modern man. Surely not by living a harmonious life can such transcendence be effected.

After I read books of that kind I feel that spiritually I am no worse off than men like Dewey and Edman who have a much larger audience for their message than I can ever expect to have. Of what use is it to have larger audiences, when the books they write and the theories they advance only help to accentuate their own futility and the helplessness of those they address. All of us white collar slaves are in the grip of the capitalistic system. We have not the courage to rebel against the tyrants that feed us. Dewey is a much better thinker than Lenin, but Lenin was a much better doer. Dewey will be celebrated as a great man by school marm's of both genders, but Lenin will be remembered by all mankind as the great Emancipator of the white race from its own predatory instincts.

* * *

Wednesday, June 10, 1931

Someone ought to make a collection of the instances of sheer am ha-arazut in the writings of the much lauded great men of former days. It might help us overcome that instinctive reverence for them which holds us spellbound and places us under the obligation of having to reckon with them. If a student of the Seminary were to interpret the passage in Waykira Rabbah XXII which refers to sacrifices the way Abarbanel (or is it Abravanel?) does he would be classed with the Am-ha-arazim (or should it be ame-ha-arazot - I feel like saying 'sic him'?) See David Hoffman in his commentary on Leviticus I, p.81

It is curious to see how David Hoffman himself, who shows acumen in criticizing Abarbanel is no less guilty of misinterpretation and manages to contradcit himself within the space of two pages.

On page 86 (op. cit) he takes exception to Maimonides' statement that the purpose of the precepts is to inculcate true ideas concerning God. His point is that deeds count for more than thoughts and as proof he quotes the dictum p.116 To apply this dictum to an issue that was totally unconsidered by those who uttered it may be permitted homiletically, but is out of place in objective writing. The dictum refers only to the importance of engaging in the performance of mizvot and not being satisfied with study of Torah as an end in itself. The question whether the purpose of the actual performance of the mizvot is to inculcate in the one who performs them a truer conception of God or just to ;ease God does not come at all within the range of that dictum.

But this is not enough. After having stated that he disagrees with Maimonides who assumes that the purpose of the mizvot is to give man a true conception of God, he writes on the very next page "Wir werden von selbst zur symbolischen Auffassung der Oppergesetze hing fuhrt." What the symbolic conception of the sacrificial laws can mean other than that those laws are intended as a medium for conveying certain ideas about God is beyond me. Unless Hoffman means to imply that Maimonides would not include the idea that God is the true owner of all that man possesses (which idea according to Hoffman Abel realized when he brought his offering) or the idea that man belongs entirely to God (which idea Noah realized) or the idea that God was present in Israel, among the ideas that are salusary to the well-being of the soul. These ideas are phases of the conception of God's omnipotence and therefore the real purpose, according to Maimonides of the mizvot.

I must get hold of Isaac H. Weisi biography to see how he explains his complete change of front from the attitude toward the oral law he takes in his introduction to the Sifra to that which he takes in his magnum opus. In the former he attacks Frankel for suggesting that the thirteen hermenentical principles are a matter of logicand therefore not necessarily given by God to Moses. In the opening sentence of his introduction to the Sifra he states in the exuberantly flowery style of the medieval writers "If any one will tell you that the Scribes interpreted the precepts as a result of much investigation and with the consent of the Sages of the generation and that they set up general principles called midot whereby the Torah was to be interpreted, ~~xy~~ say to him "Be silent, you dare not mention such a thing"... Remember and do not forget what our Sages have reiterated time and time again that the entire Toran together with its general principles and specific laws with its interpretations and inferences was given at Sinai."

When we turn to his "Dor Dor W'dorshaw" we find he has the following to say of the traditional view of the oral law as voiced by Shrira Gaon, Rashi, Maimonides "The fault (of not being able to see the truth with regard to oral tradition) ~~si~~ to be charged to the great advocates and lovers of tradition. They were unrestrained in their expression and given to exaggeration. They took literally the words of the Talmud which ascribe the Mishna and the Gemara and the ~~xxxix~~ entire body of laws etc to Sinaitic origin. (The opponents) do not take into consideration that a literal acceptation of these Talmudic statements is ~~xx~~ untenable in view of the many contradictions it must give rise to, and in view of the possibility that the ancients might have said all that for a particular reason or purpose. They are encouraged in their views when they see that the Geonim also took literally the Talmudic statements about the discussions of the

Amoraim being of Sinaitic origin (cf. Letter of R. Sherira Gaon) and that all the thirteen hermenentic principles whereby the Torah is interpreted have been received from Sinai (Rashi is the name of the Geonim and Maimonides) and they do not take note of the fact that the Geonim themselves did not base their opinion upon any special tradition but upon the evidence which they quote literally from the Talmud. If we take into account what those who put the question to R. Sherira say with regard to this subject we find that they too were perplexed by doubts concerning this matter, and that they could not, therefore, have been any generally tradition."

Perhaps the sophistry by which he clears the Geonim, Rashi and Maimonides of any responsibility for the traditional conception of the oral law affords the key to the sophistry to which he resorted when he wrote the introduction to Sifra. If you will read carefully the way he phrases his zealous defense of the traditional conception of the Oral Law and his pious attack on Frankel you will detect that he is really not expressing his own sincere belief, but simply speaking from the standpoint of ancient tradition. As with the rest of the so called Historical School in Judaism, his religion is only quotation.

Mr R. Cohen quotes Santayana as saying "Our notion of ourselves is of all notions the most biased and idealistic. If we attributed to other men only such sound judgment, just preference, honest passions, and blameless errors as we discover in ourselves, we should take but an insipid and impractical view of mankind." It is surprising to find Santayana making such a statement. Did he never hear of the inferiority complex from which the majority of mankind are suffering? If our notions of ourselves are biased they are biased on the side of undue fault finding rather than idealization.

Why do we always look to other people's opinions before we form our own, if we regard our own judgments as sound? Why do we almost imagine that we would have been better off, if we had chosen another calling, or acted differently in a number of situations, if we are prone to consider our preferences just? Only a fool can succeed in deceiving himself about the nature of his passions. As to blameless errors, if we are at all given to being objective about the contributing causes of our errors and identifying those which are beyond our control, we are likely to do the same for others no less than for ourselves. One thing is certain, that I could not justly serve as an illustration of Santayana's sweeping statement about the nature of the notions we have of ourselves. Now on the eve of the fiftieth anniversary of my birthday I think I have a fairly correct idea of myself. I am not blind to the fact that my abilities are mediocre, and that I failed to utilize them to full capacity, especially during my adolescence and young manhood. If I had no teachers to guide and inspire me, it was because I did not put forth enough effort to win high position in college, or to secure the scholarships and fellowships that would have given me the advantage of the right kind of teachers. My first failure that condemned me to that most baneful of institutions the city College of the nineties was due to my inability to win the Pulitzer scholarship. But why go on recounting my failures and shortcomings?

Despite my mediocrity I have enjoyed a greater measure of success than many of my colleagues who possess decidedly greater ability. By a stroke of luck Schechter chose me to organize the Teachers Institute. That emancipated me from Orthodoxy. Despite my inability to read character, I was fortunate in getting a wife who possesses a character that is most ideally qualified to render our married life absolutely frictionless. I believe that I would have gone to pieces if she had not afforded me the physical and mental peace that acts

like oil on troubled waters. Having led a sheltered existence I have managed to take myself more in hand as the years passed and have attained a certain degree of clarity and organization in my thinking. I am none too sanguine about the things I am doing, but I realize that the whole of American life, to say nothing of the Jewish element in America, is bound to be completely transformed before many years will have passed. The economic inequality and insecurity are daily growing more unbearable, and the reactionary forces are acting in the usual highhanded and stubborn fashion which is the forerunner of violent revolution. It is thereforo impossible to build with the prospect of permanence. The most any individual can do is to perform his task from day to day until the volcanci forces which are gathering, the forces of social cataclysm will break forth and usher in a new world order, an order similar to that which is now forming in Russia. The birth throes of the communistic order will be most violent in this country, because of the bitterness with which communism is being presented here. The only possibility of averting the dreadful civil war that will bewaged in this country between the capitalists and the proletariat would be to permit the communists to have their say and even to be represented in the political life of the nation. But such a thing is out of the question with the forces of reaction in command of all the resources of restraint and highly conscious of the danger that lurks in the ultimate success of the Russian experiment. The injustice and the suffering to which millions in this country are subjected and the inevitability of a world war that will exceed in its horror and devastation the last war have robbed me even of the desire to achieve anything lasting in the world of spiritual values. -- It is now June 11, 1931, 12:15 A.M. I am just fifty years old.

* * *

Thursday, June 11, 1931

From the moment I opened my eyes this morning to the present time of writing which is about 10:30 A.M. my mind has been agitated by a multiplicity of ideas about the things I ought to engage in to get the most out of the remaining years of my life. The first consideration was whether I was doing the right thing in spending time on this journal. I am quite sure by this time that vanity is the last thing in the world that could have enabled one to keep up this journal for so many years. As far as I can make out the immediate cause of my resorting to this journal whenever I get a chance is to express the ideas that pass through my mind. I have nobody to talk to. I miss the joys of conversation. I so seldom meet people on a social footing that I have nothing to say to them. I have not sufficient practice in small talk and they are seldom the kind of people who can discuss the more serious problems in which I happen to be interested. Consequently every time I read anything and my mind reacts to it, I just burst with the desire to communicate my reaction, and to translate it into some form of activity. I believe I am by nature a highly activistic type doomed by my vocation to inactivity. People imagine that I must be one of the happiest ~~people~~ persons in the world, since I have three full months to do anything I want with my time. They do not realize that during all that time I am like a mill whose stones keep on grinding each other for lack of grist to grind. I should have been a machinist. I remember with what passionate yearning I used to look at machines when I was a child of seven. I lived at that time in Paris. My mother had a booth in the exposition that was then being held in that city. One day I forgot to eat luch because I was fascinated by the different machines that I caught sight of on my way from the exposition to whore I lived. I left the exposition in the morning and arrived at home late at night, to find mother in a state of frantic fright.

With a temperament of that kind it is no wonder that as soon as I come across ideas that are significant and relevant to the present situation - and these are the only ones I can get interested in - I begin to burn with the desire to do something with them. But then I encounter a blank wall of complete apathy on the part of those I come in contact with, an apathy generated by a variety of causes - lack of sufficient culture, preoccupation with making money or a livelihood, and general inertia. I have no other outlet for the energy generated by what I read and think except this one of writing in this journal, which might sometimes fall into the hands of some one who could appreciate the abnormality of my inner life, and who might become the medium for articulating more clearly the purposes I cherish and translating them into action, if they are still pertinent.

But then I ask myself would I not be using my time to better advantage if I were to work on articles or books. I have been revolving in my mind the writing of a history of the Jewish religion from the beginning down to the present. There is a crying need for a book that would present the Jewish religion from the developmental standpoint. Most of the current histories are written by Christians with a bias toward Christianity. They necessarily stop with Rabbinism which they seldom do justice to. As for treating the past of the Jewish religion from the standpoint of its bearing on the present, that hasn't even been attempted. But that means health, a long stretch of free time, working facilities. I have just enough of each to create the ambition to undertake that task, but not enough to see it through. Just now I have to shake myself free from the incubus of the unfulfilled promise to present a paper on the attitude of conservative Judaism toward Biblical Criticism. I have done nearly a month's work on that paper. I have brought out to WestEnd a large collection of books I expect to consult on the subject. But then I realized that

I would have to ask conservative Judaism to give up the belief in the supernatural origin of the Jewish religion, in fact to cease identifying with supernatural revelation. In the course of the argument I would have to expose the fallacy ~~xxxxxxx~~ inhering in the whole of medieval Jewish philosophy which is based upon the dualistic conception of reality and to point out that Jewish theology is in a bad way ~~xfxxx~~ because it cannot return to the monistic of the primitive mind which sees all of life from the animistic standpoint, nor advance to the monism of the modern mind which sees all of life from the natural standpoint, because it is enchained by tradition. This analysis would only win me enemies, and perhaps strengthen the reactionaries in their contention that I am undermining Traditional Judaism. It would be like preaching communism in the United States Chamber of Commerce.

But I had consented to take part in the program of the convention. To be released from my promise I resorted to a subterfuge. I gave as an excuse that the doctor had forbidden my taking an active part in convention. Naturally my conscience feels very queasy, but I shall not afflict my soul with any violent sense of remorse. I shall merely try to remember not to undertake anything which I am not more than certain of being able to carry out. This is the main birthday resolution I form today and I pray to God that I be able to keep it.

I was going to make another resolution and that is to attend to letters that have to be answered before proceeding with my own work. But then I realized that I would have to spend so much energy in overcoming the resistance to a distasteful task that I would have little left for what I value as more important. I do ~~xxx~~ wish I could be unmindful of the petty scruples that annoy me and realize that being punctual and methodical does not always lead to more satisfactory results than the policy of laissez-faire. Here is an example. If I

had been methodical in attending to the letters which I ought to write, I should have written long ago to Samuel Levine of Detroit reminding him that I haven't been paid for traveling expenses and lecture which I delivered on April 22. It was laziness that kept me from writing. Today I received a check for $175 together with a letter of apology expressing the hope that I would come again to Detroit in the near future. How happy I am that I haven't written asking for the check!

I need to give this lecture to myself. After having dispatched a telegram to Elias Margolis that the doctor had forbidden my taking an active part in the convention and having justified myself in my own estimation for not going through with the writing of the paper on the Conservative Attitude toward Biblical Criticism, I got together the books I had been reading on the subject and started writing again from the point I had left off, only to find that I am repelled by the task. Why can't I stick to my resolution to forget about the paper? Have I not before me the example of unwarranted attack that was launched against Morgenstern when he read his paper on the Foundations of Jewish History at the 1915 Convention of the Conference of American Rabbis? I had always imagined that the Jewish convictions of the Reformists demanded no intellectual surrender of any kind and that the Reformists were prepared to adopt whole heartedly whatever conclusions the scientific approach to the Bible might lead them. The reception, however, which Morgenstern's paper encountered at that convention made it evident to me that even they are far from being free from sentimental prejudices against a thoroughgoing evolutionary type of reconstruction of the beginnings of Jewish history and religion. How, then, could I reasonably expect either the timid conservatives or hide bound fundamentalists that compose the Rabbinical Assembly to give me a favorable hearing if I were to propose to them that they repudiate supernaturalism.

They would, undoubtedly, be or appear to be so resentful of my proposal that they would be totally unable to appreciate the contructive suggestion I had intended to place before them, that of retaining the pattern of life denoted by the primacy of the Torah, a pattern that called for the acceptance of Judaism as a civilization of which religion was the phase of self-awareness and idealism.

I have just received telegrams of congratulations from Adler and Marx. The first thing that entered my mind was the trouble involved in acknowledging and thanking them for their kind wishes. Why am I so fussy and flustered when I have to attend to social amenities? Yet if I hadn't heard from anybody today I would have found reason for being unhappy in the fact that I am completely ignored. I certainly am far from being a model of contentment. I suppose I am not altogether wrong in ascribing my crankiness to "nerves" or to some other physical maladjustment. I wonder whether there is any truth in the assumption that some of the better specimens of the human race have transcended their physical maladjustments, or whether adopting M. R. Cohen's approach I should say that if they succeeded in transcending apparent physical maladjustments it was because they possessed unusual physical advantages which were not apparent. They may have had extraordinary type of thyroid gland or some other physical part of their make up that secreted sufficient vitality to more than counterbalance the drain caused by some visible physical ailment or disease. On the other hand, I, who am in good shape, as far as the apparent side of my physical being is concerned, except for the annual affliction of the hay fever, may have rather poor reservoirs of vitality. This of course, raises the fundamental question of freedom of the will. I must leave that for some other time when I shall discuss my impression of Cohen's book.

What acumen and insight Eduard Meyer displays in his "Die Israeliten und ihre Nachbarstamene" After one reads his analysis of Exod. III, IV, XIII, 17- XIV as I have done today it seems but wasted effort to dignify the traditional conception of the Pentateuch with a serious attempt to refute it. This reading I have done today marks the beginning of my work on the development of Jewish religion. May God grant that I bring that work to a successful conclusion within reasonable time.

It is more than ten years I have been carrying around with me the view that the story of the crossing of the Red Sea is based on a misinterpretation of the poetic passage in the Song - Exod. XV,8. In fact I had intended sending a comment to that effect to the Journal of Biblical Studies (?). When I first thought of that explanation it appeared to me so plausible that I could not imagine that some of the modern exegetes could have overlooked it. I even had Kadushin look through some of the exegetical literature on the passages in question. You can therefore imagine my surprise to come across that very explanation in Eduard Meyer's "Die Israelites etc p. 23f.

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Saturday night, June 13, 1931

I received twenty-seven telegrams of congratulations on my fiftieth birthday anniversary, the most flattering among them being Louis Finkelstein's, Shalom Spiegel's, Bernard Semel's and the one from the SAJ who also sent me a bouquet of fifty gorgeous roses. The greatest surprise and pleasure, however, were afforded me last night by a skit which Judith and Al Addlestone worked out for the occasion, and in which they together with Hadassah, Naomi and Selma took part. Though it is a hastily improvised sort of thing it is an excellent take-off on my problems with the ~~through~~ organizations I am working

with. The skit represented Lena admitting to the house a student of the Seminary, a student of the Institute and an SAJ member with all of whom I was supposed to have made appointments to come to see me at 7:00 o'clock. They are all kept waiting, and while they do so each one sings some lines suitable to the character he plays.

Here are some of the jingles sung to Gilbert and Sullivan tunes with the exception of the SAJ song:

Seminary Song:

O, I know that this sermon, my mark will determine
I've followed all rules homiletic
At the top is my text, my proposition comes next
Ah, my method is most systematic
To the troubles of Jews, to apply I would choose
A philosophy that is pragmatic.
From the poets I quote, with long words I emote
Bringing in a touch of the esthetic
To the prophets referring, my message is stirring
With metaphors xxxxxxxx strong or pathetic
Though I haven't, I fear, got a single idea
I can make all my gestures emphatic
And how hard do I try with his rules to comply
But alas! they are too xxxx enigmatic.

Teachers Institute Song (Reinterpretation of the Bible)

Everything is upside down, David never wore a crown
Shyster lawyers wrote the Torah, Psalms belong in the Gemorah
Dearie me, can it be!
Revelation is not true, Abraham was not a Jew
Ezekiel was a prophet false, Miriam danced the Danube waltz
So they say, anyway
Ten Commandments were lobbyed through by the WCTU
Evidence still remain that Yahweh rode by aeroplane

So what?

SAJ Kol Nidre Song (to the tune of Kol Nidre)

Times are hard!
Business is bad!
The wolf! The wolf is knocking at my door
Oi veh! Oi veh! The wolf is knocking at my door!
My pent-house is filled with weeping
My stocks are downward creeping
All because we didn't say it!
Ai, ai, ai, ai, ai etc.
Give us back this little thing we beg of you.

The following was sung by Al who impersonated me:

When I was a kid I would combat
Any boy in the neighborhood at pussy-cat;
My mother would cry from the window high
"Come Motle, and study Jewish histor-i

I studied so hard, I studied so well,
That I'm rabbi preacher teacher in Israel.

In 85th Street shul, from the high pulpit
I stole many glances like a shy culprit
To where a maiden fair, with golden hair
Made me want to say things I didn't think I'd dare

I said them at last, I said them so well
That now she is a Rebitizin in Israel.

And now with an air hat is kind and wise
She and I keep our tempers as we supervise
The wild careers with propriety

Of our private Ladies Aid Society

But try as I may, I can't compel
Any one of them to worry about Israel.

I think the last ~~conflet~~ couplet is a gem. It sums up exactly how I feel about the unwillingness of my children to share my interests and my worries. I can't compel doesn't mean here that I try and do not succeed, but that I see no use in trying to compel them. If they can not ~~xxxx~~ manage to lead Jewish lives with some degree of spontaneity and ~~xxxxxxxxx~~ naturalness, if they have to keep on denying themselves legitimate freedom of action, if they have to be forever poignantly and painfully conscious of their Jewishness, what earthly or spiritual benefit can they get out of it? As it is hard to be truly happy except in a happy world so hard is it to be a Jew except in Jewish surroundings. My entire striving with the concept of Jewish civilization has been to get my colleagues to realize the importance of building up in this country Jewish environment and atmosphere, and stimulating Jewish creativity through freedom of thought and love of art. But if those who ought to engage in such work are too stupid to appreciate how urgent it is, or too selfish to forego their own personal advantage or ease, why should the average Jew be expected to sacrifice himself for what must in that case be a hopeless cause? I want my children to be absolutely and unqualifiedly happy. I don't want them to do anything for my sake which they would not also do for their own sake.

* * *

Sunday, June 14, 1931

I wonder how the technical problem of teaching the Pentateuch from the modern standpoint will ever be solved. In the case of secular studies any change in the conception of the subject matter studied can at once be introduced into the pedagogic presentation of that

subject matter. Let us assume that physics has definitely done away with atoms and ether, the text books dealing with physics will then discuss the nature and laws of matter in terms of the new concepts. But we cannot go about the same way with the changed conception of the authorship and composition of the Pentateuch. In the first place, the new conception of the Pentateuch is far too complicated for the immature mind. Secondly, the old conception which dominated the Jewish mind for he last 2500 years cannot possibly be omitted from a Jewish training, because it constitutes the most significant historic fact of Jewish life during that entire period. The worst of it is that the immature mind cannot grasp the value of knowing anything that was once believed in but is no longer regarded as true. It is possible to teach a child mythology, but that is a different thing from trying to convey an integrated system of life that was based on an illusion.

If there is to be any modernist version of Jewish education it will have to be based on a completely different kind of content from that which constitutes the subject matter of the present day Jewish curriculum. The most important part of that content will have to be 1. A realistic presentation of Jewish history free from all legendary material. 2. A study of the problems of ethics and religion from the standpoint of the modern world outlook.

The principles governing the writing of the history of a people should be the following:

1. A distinction should be made between hypotheses and ascertained facts.

2. Equal emphasis should be placed upon the economic, the social, the political, the intellectual, the spiritual aspects of the people's life.

3. The unique and individual traits developed by the people as a result of historical circumstances.

4. The extent to which the people adjusted itself to changing situations, and the extent to which there persisted the element of maladjustment, I believe that if these principles were followed in the writing of history, history would serve the two important functions: that of emancipating us from the past and making of the past a laboratory for the study of human nature.

* * *

Monday, June 15, 1931

The move on the part of the Board of Education to introduce courses in the Bible to be conducted after school hours, which seems to be the result of reactionary religious influence working behind the scenes, is merely a recrudescense of medievalism. The very ~~idea~~ attempt of trying to give young children an idea of the Bible in one hour a week courses, and regarding that as adequate religious instruction is part of the medieval outlook, especially the Christian in which the mere repetition by rote of biblical phrases is ~~considered~~ believed to ~~hav-ing~~ magic potency.

The reason it is difficult to translate pre-modern ideas into modern terminology is that we no longer reckon with the concept of magic. This was brought home to me in the discussion which I carried on during the short time I spent at Markel's this morning. He lost his wife recently and I went to pay him a condolence call. I found two of his sons and the relatives of his deceased wife. Markel happened to repeat the usual complaint about the traditional prayerbook as being too long. I replied that it was not the length but the monotony of the prayers that we should complain of. One of the sons chimed in that he was bored by the repetitiousness of the few prayers he had occasion to recite at the services in his house. It occurred to me afterwards that the basic reason for the repetitiousness is that those who formulated them had no interest in ideas about God. Their object was to stir God into some desired action by means of the prayer formulas

which were supposed to exercise a magic effect, analogous to the animal sacrifices for which those formulas were a substitute.

It was clever of the Society for the Advancement of Atheism to send in a request to the Board of Education to be permitted to teach the Bible from their point of view. "We would teach the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth about the Bible" they say. Between the reactionaries and atheists, what chance is there for a sane and constructive conception of the Bible and of religion?

I often wonder why with so much matter for thought people invent all kinds of artificial problems as a means of whiling away their time. It seems to me that if moralists and religionists had presented their subject matter to the people in terms of the actual riddles and puzzles that it consists of, instead of pretending that it consists of absolute and eternal truths they would have held the myriads spellbound, whereas now they don't succeed in holding the interest even of ~~of but~~ a few. The energy that people spend on word puzzles could have brought about great knowledge and clarity of thought, if it were applied to problems of economics, ethical relationships, the meaning of life &c.

I was led to these reflections by the charade contest which the Sat. Review began running in its columns. In a clever introduction this pastime, said to have been invented by the French in the eighteenth century, is described as "teasing, vexing and difficult but it is altogether irresistible." We should hardly be honest with our readers, did we not state before we set forth the matter and rules of the competition, that the charade innocent diversion though it appears, has deadly properites. Once yield to it and it has you in its grasp. Into the very borderland of slumber its perplexing syllables persist, startling the sluggish mind into recurrent spasms of activity long after unconsciousness should have claimedit for its own. On mountain

climbs it will not be left behind. It follows to the bath. It intrudes on reading. It silences conversation, though in the whole of its best known example it entertains company."

I had occasion to experience the truth of the foregoing description. This morning as I went into the city I came across the charade column which is to be conducted for the next few weeks by Dean Briggs of Harvard. The first charade I made out easily. The trick of letting the novice at gambling win his first stakes was apparently applied in that case. The second charade stumped me and kept me guessing for more than an hour without result. I am now so much under its spell that I have to exert quite a bit of will power not to keep on thinking about it. Now of what earthly use was that distraction? Can it compare in pleasure and cultural value both of which I derived from reading Sheldon's review of M. R. Cohen's book, which took me only ten minutes? That one term "half-thinkers" by which the reviewer designates the majority of half-educated followers of every novelty in science art philosophy and religion opens up to me a veritable storehouse of ideas, to say nothing of his stressing the point made by M.R.C. that right reason is essentially the principle of polarity.

I feel the same way about all sorts of games. Of course they are interesting because they furnish an outlet for the competitive instincts. But aren't there enough occasions in life to emphasize the inequality that exists in human life? Why rub it in more and make the one who hasn't been born with as much muscular power or quickness of mind as his fellow remember his inferiority? I remember having tried a few years ago to learn the game of golf, after having been urged by my friends to do so. Apart from the fact that I rebelled having to learn useless intricacies of an expensive and time wasting sport, I couldn't see the sense of grown up people purposely putting up artificial obstacles in the form of bunkers to add interest to the game. As though life itself didn't put up enough obstacles in our

way without having to create artificial ones.

No doubt this sort of cerebration about games will put me down as a dull humorless fellow, complaining that the world refuses to adjust itself to his physical and mental shortcomings. In a review of a life of Charles W. Eliot, which appeared recently, the writer pokes fun at Eliot's suggestion that instead of having a certain Harvard college song end with "Down with Yale," he proposed the emendation "Three cheers for Harvard and one for Yale!" Thank goodness I can get plenty of fun and enoyment out of so many things in life that I don't see why it is necessary to resort to artificially created difficulties which not only divert us from overcoming the natural difficulties, but indirectly add to them. Let people sing and dance and play, but the playing should be free and spontaneous, and avoid all organized forms and competitions and rewards. Literature, drama, art in which the laughable aspect of life should receive even more attention than the serious, would be far more health giving and recreative than the senseless games both indoor and outdoor.

I wonder to what extent these questions are dealt with in the communist philosophy.

I read in the N.Y.Times Magazine of June 14 the following item:

'Here at the base of Mt. Kamet (piling its towers 25,447 feet into the remote sky) are five men of the West, young, courageous and vigilant...They seek to explore the source of the Ganges which rises somewhere in these snowfields(of the Himalayas) and carries its waters 1500 miles to pour them into the Eastern Bay of Bengal. To the men of the West with their passion for facts, for physiological topographical and botanical data, there is fascination in searching out the hidden source of this mighty river of India, this most sacred river in the religion of the Hindus. But to the mystical Hindus, that knowledge is already theirs. To them the source of great Mother Ganges is al-

ready known. It is in heaven (in the Mount Meni) where Siva dwells of their religion, where it flows as the viyadganga, issuing from the foot of Vishnu, descending from his mansion on the heigh's of Maru dividing into four streams and passing through the air, at last reaching the lakes on the summits of the upholding mountains...The men of the Western world seek knowledge and facts: the Hindu is content to worship the unknown."

The writer gives an elaborate description of some of the pilgrimmages, processions, rites and temples associated with the Ganges which is worshipped as a "benign goddess, the giver of health and prosperity, of children and happiness, the great purifier of sin."

Substitute in the foregoing account Torah for Ganges and you get the full force of the distinction between the ancient and the modern approach to the Jewish Scriptures. If I were to have gone on, as I am still tempted to do, with the paper on the attitude toward Biblical Criticism, all I would accomplish would be to prove that the Hindu conception of the Ganges is untenable. Why waste any time on the obvious when I can join the company of those who are exploring its origin and seeking all the available knowledge and facts?

* * *

Tuesday, June 16, 1931

"A large steamer was wrecked off the coast at Dieppe. With considerable difficulty some of the passengers were rescued in a boat. A few custom house officers who had rushed to their assistance began by asking them if they had anything to declare." (Bergson-Laughter) Somewhat parallel to the action of the custom house officers would be my attempt to get the so-called group of conservative Jews to declare themselves on the question of revelation.

What I tried to say in my stammering fashion about the weakenss of Dewey's solution of the problem of contemporary life is stated clearly and pointedly by a sympathetic critic of his who writes in The New Republic of June 3, "Dewey's idea is a socialized America. In terms of his own position, the only quarrel one can have with him is his failure to appreciate the instrumental value of class struggle rather than class collaboration in effecting the transition from Corporate America to Collective America."

* * *

Wednesday, June 17, 1931

I was entirely too precipitate in the parallel I drew between the exploratory approach to the source of the Ganges and the scientific appraach to the Bible. The exploration of the Ganges will before long result in unquestionable certainty concerning its origin. The only certainty which the scientific study of the Bible can yield is that it it impossible to reconstruct the beginnings of Israel and Israel's religion.

When I read Eduard Meyer's theory of the origin of the Levite-priests and of the way they came to play so significant a part in the development of Judaism I felt the joy of the physicist when he discovers the mathematical formula whereby he acquires a new orientation on some laws of nature. (See "Die Israelites und ihre Nathborstamme, Halle, 1906, p. 85 eq.) But when in the same book I came upon Bernhard Luther's reconstruction of the early history of Israel, in which he integrates some of E.M's conclusions, except that he differs from him as to the habitat of J. I was totally flabbergasted. (see id. p. 163 sq) According to Luther the common origin of the northern and southern kingdom - Israel and Judah- is a fiction. His hypothesis is that Israel was identical with the Canaanites. He does not attempt to account for the worship of YH as a war deity, that was prevalent among some of the tribes of Israel before they came in contact with the

worship of YH that emanated from the tribe of Judah. I confess that his entire hypothesis seems to me ~~fanatical~~ fantastic. Yet it has as much warrant as most of the other hypotheses that have been built up with regard to the origin of Israel and Israel's religion. The question then arises "Since the scientific study of the Bible must for want of definite and reliable criteria, consist in the skillful use of the imagination and since it can never lead to the discovery of unquestionable affirmative facts, how can it be reckoned with in any attempt to reconstruct Jewish life and thought? If this be the case, the Bible can no longer function as the basic text of Jewish life. In a sense it has not functioned as such since the days of the Tannaim. For what actually has been basic was the interpretation and not the text of the Bible. Henceforth, however, the Bible must retreat even from that position. It can only constitute the part to illustrate the early history of the Jewish people but can have no place in texts of a normative character. Whether we need any texts of a normative character, outside of an actually functioning system of law which is possible only in Palestine is another question.

Years ago when I began to teach the Pentateuch in the Teachers Institute I worked out an interpretation of it which treated it from the standpoint of the final redactor or school of redaction who may have flourished about the beginning of the Alexandrian period. I was convinced that the meaning which the Pentateuch and the Historical Books yielded when studied sub specie unitatis, in which the unitas was the purpose expressed in Ps. 105 and elsewhere, were the meanings of which the final redactors were themselves aware. I even wrestled valiantly with the difficulties and contradictions created by chronicling midrashist with his fanciful dates and genealogies. I now see that this midrashist was merely an earlier edition of thos Amoraim who read the Book of Chronicles from the standpoint of the principle

(p.134) (The late Joseph Mayor Asher who was my predecessor said that dictum meant that the purpose of history is to inculcate moral truth. This is a case of one transgression of truth begetting another.) The illustration Bernfeld gives of the method employed by that midrashist in inventing names is one of the most laughable curiosities I have come across (Cf. Gen. 46,13, Num 26, 23-24 and Chron I u, 8 with Jud. 10,1) It reminds me of the rabbinic derivation of from .

It must have been about eighteen or nineteen years ago when with my family I stayed in a cottage on the same Westwood Avenue where I am staying now, on the same side of the avenue, the third house from North Cleveland Avenue, (I just learned that the number of the house was 279) Instead of going bathing and enjoying summer rest I sat all day brooding on the interpretation of Genesis and wrote out all of it in detail. I revised the first part of it as far as Ch. XXII inclusive. It is much shorter in the revised form than it was in the original. The rest I still have in the original form. I have never had occasion to use this latter part in any of the courses I have been giving. The only time I used it was when I taught the group consisting of Dushkin, Berkson, Chipkin, Rosen, Isaacs and Miss Aaronson (now Mrs. Brickner). Eugene Kohn's first book on teaching the Bible is based on that type of interpretation. I found later that Morgenstern used that same method in the first chapter of his book on Genesis. There was a time when I dreamt of writing out the interpretation in the form recently adopted by Joseph H. Hertz in his edition of Genesis and Exodus to be used in connection with the weekly Sabbath readings.

I still believe thatif the Pentateuch is to be more than a source book for all kinds of imaginary reconstructions of Israel's beginnings, if it is to have any normative value whatever, the method of interpretation I have worked out -- pointing to a national self-consciousness

and emphasizing the civilization pattern of Judaism -- would have to be adopted as the only way in which the Pentateuch can continue to function as the basic literary text of Jewish education, or means of transmitting the spiritual heritage from generation to generation.

* * *

Thursday, June 18, 1931

I was so carried away by what I said in the foregoing paragraph that I became anxious to communicate that thought to the members of the Rabbinical Assembly at the coming convention. I therefore thought that I ought to present the paper I had promised, despite the telegram of withdrawal I had sent to Elias Margolin. At the end of the paper I would have occasion to state the constructive phase of the problem created by the scientific study of the Bible. All last night and this morning I tried to go on with the argument from the point I had left off when I stopped working on the paper but the further I proceeded the more clearly I sawthat I was moving toward the wall of a blind alley, the wall of prejudice that religion is necessarily supernatural. Unless I was prepared to break down that wall or to sanction the work of wrecking which has already been done by the Reformist method, I would be too restricted in the scope of my argument to express freely what I wanted. I could not add to what I have already written in the book on Judaism as a Civilization. Why then get myself involved in fruitless discussion which might lead to consequences of an unpleasant nature?

* * *

Sunday, June 27, 1931

I was quite leated last week when I received the following letter from the Seminary faculty, dated June 19, 1931:

Dear Doctor Kaplan:

It is my great privilege and pleasure, as secretary of the Faculty, to convey to you mine and their heartfelt congratulations on

your fiftieth birthday.

By your teaching with which you have inspired those who studied at the Seminary and by your public utterances, you have made your influence felt in the progress of American Judaism. May you be granted many more years of good health and vigor to carry on your work with distinction and success.

Very faithfully yours,

Israel Davidson

This letter put me into so ironic a frame of mind that I felt like asking them to forgive me for having acted as though it was my function to be a thorn in their side. I sincerely regretted all the caustic remarks I ever made about them or penned in this journal. It is remarkable what a cheering effect a kind word can have upon one who is unhappy and disgruntled.

When I told Eisenstein about this letter he confirmed the belief which had dawned on my mind, that it was probably dictated by Louis Finkelstein, with whom it is a matter of principle or policy to be lavish of praise, when praise is to be administered. Notwithstanding this possibility Davidson signed the letter, and the entire Faculty is represented as concurring with what it says. Why not, then, apply to it the kind of pragmatic interpretation by which I manage to raise the Pentateuch from the level of a composite document representing views of different writers to the level of a national instrument animated by a unifying aspiration? Interpreted pragmatically, or functionally, this letter is sent to me as an olive branch of peace. I shall accept it as such and do my best to live up to that spirit in which I now accept it.

Dr. Ginzberg has also written to me personally a note of congratulations, and has sent me a copy of the lecture he delivered on (p.136) at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, together with his inscription in which he addresses me as . Perhaps this accounts for my present determination to reciprocate the friendly advances of the Faculty with more friendly feelings on my part.

When I found that my restlessness was not abated by turning to reading I took up again the translation of the Mesillat which Adler had returned me at the end of last October with the criticisms of the two men who read it. The names of the readers were not given to me, but Israel Davidson happened to mention to me casually about a year ago that he had read the translation. I therefore recognized at once which criticisms were his. They dealt mostly with my Introduction in which I developed, I thought, a rather interesting conception of ethics, and as I might have expected, he missed the point entirely, He criticized my transliteration of Mesillat because I spelled it only with one l. He evidently read the translation superficially but he said he liked it.

The second critic went at me hammer and tongs. It did not require much guessing on my part to identify him. That combination of bumptiousness information imparting and patronizing airs spelled Jacob Kohn. (Nov. 18, 1931: I believe I was mistaken. I think the second critic was Hyamson. I do not take back any of the adjectives.) I was so exasperated by his tone that I paid no attention to Adler's letter, and almost made up my mind not to return the manuscript. If I had not been busy with the manuscript of "Judaism as a Civilization" my resentment would have soon worn off and I would have made the necessary changes. But all my spare time having been given to the

latter I did not touch the Mesillat until about two weeks ago. Having come to the criticims of the readers with a more objective mind I discovered that I mught to be grateful to Kohn for having pointed out some serious omissions and having made some excellent suggestions. It was with a great deal of satisfaction that I sent away the material to Adler last Thursday after having entered all the necessary corrections. (Later I learned that the second critic was none other than Rev. Dr. M. Hyamson.)

In addition I have begun to revise once more the manuscript of "Judaism as a Civilization." I do not know why it is that I have to labor so hard to express myself clearly and forcibly. I suspect that this difficulty is not due altogether to my poor memory and to my not having at hand at the moment of need a large variety of words and phrases from which to choose. The cause lies probably much deeper. Perhaps it is because I cannot write about Judaism with the tingle and abandon of one who is convinced of the ultimate victory of the cause he is fighting for. The subconscious apprehension that Judaism is a lost cause forces all my outward expression into the most accursed region of life, known by the term of "As If." The sterility, the Sysiphus mood, the heartbreak character of that region would make an excellent subject for a drama by a playwright like Pirandello.

A Sabbath morning like the one I spent yesterday will perhaps explain why I live an "As If" life:

I got up at 7:30 feeling quite well. The sun shone brightly and the day promised to be a typical one for June. I was through with breakfast about 8:30 and I sat down on the back lawn to study the phrases which I have noted down in the course of my reading. Although I have kept up that practice for a great many years, I have

seldom been able to make use of those phrases in my speaking and writing. Nevertheless the other day when I had mislaid the note book and thought it was lost, I felt as though a piece of my life were destroyed.

I was in a placid frame of mind bordering almost on serenity as I was enjoying the toothsome word-morsels. But before long my peace of mind was gone. I came across the phrase #like a polar bear on an icefloe that is drifting into warmer zones, watching in growing impotence the steady dwindling of his home." That phrase struck me as an apt description of the present status of Jewish life.

At 9:30 the mailman brought the mail which included a copy of the Jewish Daily Bulletin. In the very first column of the Bulletin I read "Basle Hears Report Britain may be asked to Abandon Mandate Over Palestine." If the interpretation given in the Bulletin to the project which is supposed to have been hatched at a secret session of the Mandate Commission is correct then all our hopes of having a Jewish national home in Palestine are to be finally and forever frustrated. With that thought in my mind I walked with Lena to the small synagogue which is situated on Second Avenue cor, Bath to attend services. When we were approaching the synagogue we noticed a few men and women standing outside near the steps waiting for more people to arrive. I was offended by the sight ~~xx~~ of the straggling little group standing there on the lawn and advertising to all the world our spiritual bankruptcy. There were fifteen people in all but the women don't count so they stood there waiting for some men to arrive to make up the requisite quorum of ten.

"Let us go in," I said. "What is the use of standing outside?"

If those people had really come to pray, to commune with God, to think about God they would have entered the synagogue immediately and have been rather glad of the opportunity to meditate quietly before the clatter of the services starts in. But all these people go

to the synagogue with their feet first. Attending services is a purely reflex action with them. When the clock strikes 9:30 or thereabouts on Saturday morning, their leg muscles begin to get restless, and that restlessness is diffused over the whole organism, whose balance is disturbed. This balance is restored as soon as the organism moves in the direction of the synagogue. All the movements from that moment to the time the man or woman returns home are purely physiological in character with scarcely a thought on religion, God or prayer to interrupt the series.

I led the way into the synagogue and planted myself in the corner seat after having put on my shoulders the woolen strip known as a "Tallis," which I took from the large pile heaped up on the low partition near the door and having provided myself with a copy of the "Humash" and of the Prayer Book. The latter was taken only for effect. Every time I handle a prayerbook I am filled with rage at our "great leaders" of the past for having missed the opportunity of filling the mind of the common man with stirring ideas, instead of with a lot of disjointed and meaningless praises of God. The few really significant and vital phrases are not to be found in the prayers that count, but on the edge of the prayer book, as it were.

The first thing that struck my eye was the memorial window to my right. The Jew who contributed the measly sum which it must have cost to put it in had to get his money's worth by sprawling his father's name over it. The man's name is Eibschutz. This is not enough. All and sundry have to be informed that he is a descendent of Jonathan Eibschutz. Hence the addition (p.139) . My annoyance at this cheap Jew was eclipsed by my vexation at not being able to recall during the entire morning the name of Jonathan Eibschutz antagonist Jacob Emdin. All that stood out in my mind was the bitter feud between those two men and the Hillul ha-shem it caused.

In the meantime the fat bellied "Shames" wrapped himself solemnly in a "Tallis" as he pronounced his benediction over it, and then pushing it back over his shoulders began reciting the prayers in a monotone sing song. I let my thoughts wander and I began to deaydream about what I would do if I were master of my fate. Since the Jews have nothing to look forward to as a people, now that Palestine is to be handed over to the Arabs there is nothing left for me to do as a Jewish teacher or preacher. The Orthodox build on the authority of the past. I find the past teachings obsolete and irrelevant. I have therefore been trying to build on the authority of the future, on the latent possibilities in the Jewish people. The sine qua non for the materialization of these possibilities is a Jewish national home. With that out of the picture all Jewish hopes turn out to be a mirage. Suppose I were to give up the idea of trying to conserve and develop Jewish life, and were perfectly free to choose some other field for the fostering of spiritual values. It would certainly not be Reformism which is simply a hodge podge of medievalism and modernism, with as little prospect of exerting any influence or taking permanent root in this country as Orthodoxy. Nor would it be Ethical Culture which is condemned to impotent bleating of ethical maxims that everybody takes for granted and no one has the courage to translate into action. The same is true of the community and the Humanist movements. There is, as a matter of fact, no place in modern society for organized religion or ethical teaching, no matter how loose or voluntary the organization be. So long as religion laid claim to the exercise of supernatural power ~~was~~ there was justification for giving it organized expression. The only time that there can be any justifiable place for naturalistic religion is when society is in a state of economic equilibrium by which I mean that state in which it takes its economic order for granted. But when society is in such ferment as it has been since Feudalism has been broken up, it is

entirely too much preoccupied with the problem of what constitutes a normal social order to have any mind for the cultivation of religious and ethical ideas which are meant to regulate either the social relationships within the general frameowrk of society or to relate the individual to the cosmos as a whole. It is that framework which is wanting at present. Capitalism has broken down and communism is still in the making. To ignore these fundamental issues and confine oneself to the more limited relationships of life is like planning every part of the house without taking the foundation into account. How is it possible to make any specific recommendations as to what constitutes justice in the relation between employers and employes when to urge equality that would mean giving the employes the right of representation in industry is treated as sedition? In America as in all cpaitalistic countries, religious organization cannot be representative of national life as a whole, but only of the capitalistic interests since it is only the capitalistic class that is in a position to maintain religious organization.

My place by right would be in a country like Russia where society has attained a state of economic equilibrium so far as it has come to take the new economic order for granted. I do not mean to say that my function would consist of delivering sermons. I could probably act in some judicial capacity, or shop chairman to adjust disputes, or teacher of some useful branch of knowledge, like English, to people who have to know that language. Whatever ideas I have on ethics or relgion would have to be communicated through the medium of whatever concrete activity I would be engaged in. Suppose I were to apply to representatives of Russian government in this country and tell them of my willingness to break with my mode of life and to eke out a place for myself in the new social order in Russia by trying to make myself as useful as I can, they would simply laugh at me. They would undoubtedly

tell me I am too old to begin life anew, and to tear myself up by my roots from the social order to which I owe all that I am and all that I have.

What then is there for me to do but to make the best out of the anomolous situation in which I am doomed to spend the rest of my life, unless I shall live to see the overthrow of capitalism in this country? But in what, specifically, does the best consist? To go on teaching and preaching "as if" it were possible for Judaism to have a future in America.

Thus finding myself at the end of my tether even in my daydream I opened to the portion of the week - which happened to be Hukkat-Balak -- and tried to learn some of the grammatical forms of the aramaic in the Targum in order that I might be able to insert the few sentences in the K$_o$l Nidrei which would enable me to restore it to the Yim Kippur service. Those sentences would limit the vows etc to those uttered in anger with the purpose of keeping aloof from some one who has displeased us. I have been trying to get hold of an aramaic grammar that would be intelligible but I suppose I haven't tried enough.

The services in the meantime progressed to the reading of the Torah. I was called up "shishi" the portion which is usually assigned to the dignitary or rabbi. The fat Shames read the Sidra with a monotonously piping voice that was accompanied by a gurgle, and that sent forth a wave of halitosis that almost made me dizzy when I stood near him. I chanted the benedictions, both before and after the portions that was read to me as though nothing in the world ever bothered me, when as a matter of fact I was actually performing mental gymnastics to fit the meanings of the words to my outlook on life so that I might not appear a hypocrite to myself. What a life that is! (p.142)

When it came to the second part of the service a young man with a voice less grating than that of the Shames' did the reading or chanting. I could see he had his mind as much on what he was saying as I had on the relativity theory. During the intervals in which the congregation ~~xxxxx~~ responded he would signal to his little boy to turn to the proper page in the prayer book.

My mind remained passive until the congregation began chanting the concluding him "Adon Alom" Again I balked. The hymn has fine style and rhythm but how is one to stomach such as an absurdity as P.142 What sheer nonsense. How can one be a king when there is no one to be a king over? Is this not one of the even the medieval philosophers admitted in no way diminished God's power? What is gained, then, by passing off such twaddle as religious poetry?

On the way from the synagogue, Lena and I were accompanied by Mr. Kleban who is a member of the SAJ. Discussing the good that I seem to derive from my stay in Long Branch, he remarked that a man of my type ought to be able to enjoy good health, since I had so little to worry or annoy me.

* * *

Thursday, July 2, 1931

It appears that the Telegraphic Agency reporteer misconstrued some vague rumor which he served up as news to the effect that the Mandate's commission was contemplating to free England from her responsibility as a mandatory over Palestine. When I was still suffering from the fright which that news gave me I was momentarily consoled by the words of the Haftarah last Saturday morning
I prayed for the time when we Jews would no longer be at the mercy of every change in the political weather of the world.

What exactly did the prophets and psalmists mean when they condemned all trust in man and urged reliance solely upon God? If they had reference specifically to the tendency of ancient Jewish leaders to make league with some of the potentates of the neighboring kingdoms, or to similar alliances which resulted in the adoption of alien customs and ideas I can very well understand why they denounced so bitterly what appeared like repudiation of the God of Israel. But if they objected to all forms of reliance upon human aid then they were merely preaching anti-social doctrine and advocating theurgy. I can hardly believe that of them. I believe my first guess is the correct one.

Yesterday I was in town only to come back a godd bit shaken up by the two things which transpired for me there. The first was the discussion with Henry Rosenthal about the symposium of articles which I am planning to publish. Eisenstein and I worked out a list of subjects to be discussed in that symposium with a view of setting forth some of the implications of the conception of Judaism as a civilization. We showed the list to Rosenthal. He turned up his nose at it. He maintained that we were threshing threshed wheat. What he expected was some manifesto that would commit us to a program based upon economic radicalism. The fact is that I agree with him entirely, but to put it into effect I would have to be economically independent. I have to support my family and am entirely at the mercy of the capitalist system which would spew me out the moment I would dare advocate what I believe to be the only way out of the impasse both social and religious. But most of the time I am resigned to the anomalousness of the situation, and like one who is sick I finally work myself into a position where I least feel the pain. But when some one comes along who is less inclined to make terms with the world and

takes me to task for my half-measures I feel as though I were jolted out of my compromises with evil. Becoming aware that I am trapped by capitalism, and am too powerless to break away, I get very much depressed.

It was just that feeling of being trapped which the second experience I had yesterday gave me. The main purpose of my coming into town was to meet in conference at luncheon a number of SAJ members to get them to contribute toward the $15,000 deficit fund, in order that the Liebovitzs make their grant. Of the ten people to whom I had sent letters only two came. All the others found excuses or did not reply at all. The two who came, Charles Cohen and W. P. Goldman, gave advice but not money. I asked Semel to come to help me out. I don't know whether to thank him or to swear at him for being helpful because it is his willingness to help that led me into this business of "schnorring." Unfortunately 10,000 of the 15,000 is what the SAJ owes me. I am afraid that if the deficit fund will not be made up I will lose that money. The very fact that I am to benefit by that fund only makes my failure to get them to contribute all the more humiliating. What am I to do? A thousand times the thought of resigning has passed through my mind. But then I would have to do without the few extras, like books, secretarial help that make it possible for me to work on the few things from which I get the only spiritual compensation for my suppressed life. Again I say, I am trapped.

* * *

Tuesday, July 14, 1931

I concluded today another revision of my "Judaism as a Civilization." I spent on it the greater part of the last four weeks. As I went over the book this time I felt satisfied that it offered the only plausible program for American Judaism. Much in it sounds like counsel of desperation, and I doubt whether very many Jews will be

found who will be ready to pay the price in effort and sacrifice which such counsel calls for. It may be that the book is fifteen or twenty years too late. That, of course, is to be seen. Anyhow, I am glad it's off my chest. I even believe it is quite readable. The passages which I rewrote in the course of this last revision were improved at least a hundred per cent. So that's that.

The convention of the Rabbinical Assembly came and went. It took place last week at the Scarborough Hotel here in Long Branch. It lasted from Monday to Wednesday. I attended all the sessions and took part in some of the discussions. It was in most respects a replica of the one that took place here two years ago. It afforded me one reason for satisfaction, and many reasons for regret. My satisfaction is due to my not having read the paper on Biblical Criticism. My regrets are due to my having spoken. Most of the things I said dealt with important matters which deserved more careful analysis than I gave them before speaking. I spoke about the problem of Jewish education and Jewish prayer. The ideas I expressed were really not the ones I should have stressed and what I should have said escaped my mind. On the other hand, if I had remained silent, my silence would have been interpreted either as apathy or as sulking.

The one thing I accomplished was to have the convention pass a resolution to appoint a committee to define the position of the Rabbinical Assembly toward fundamental problems of Judaism. Levinthal, who is the president of the R.A. wasn't sure whether he ought to allow the resolution to be brought up for discussion or to go by default. Fortunately I got Milton Steinberg of Indianapolis to watch that the resolution should be brought up. The reactionaries led by Louis Epstein and Ch. Is. Hoffman tried to sidetrack it. It finally passed by a vote of 23 against 17. I wonder though whether Levinthal will appoint such a committee and if appointed whether the committee will be

equal to the task to be assigned to it.

Kadushin is stopping in Long Branch this year. I am very sorry for the poor showing he makes every time I hear him. He certainly means well but he labors under both natural and artificial handicaps. Like all of us he has mediocre abilities, but in addition he suffers from a sense of inferiority which prevents him from making as good a use of his abilities as he might otherwise. In his attitude toward me he seems to be obsessed with the idea that I am trying to crush his individuality. He therefore makes it a point to disagree with me, although he is completely in sympathy with my entire approach to the problem of Judaism. If, for instance, I organize my ideas about Traditional Judaism around the three categories of God, Torah and Israel, he finds it necessary to make a fourfold classification and to divide the category of the God idea into the justice of God and the mercy of God. He fights shy of the formula "Judaism as a civilization" and tries to be original by advocating Organic Judaism. Our common cause suffers through his taking that attitude, and he himself gains nothing by it. His paper on the attitude of Conservative Judaism toward Jewish nationalism which he gave in outline form on Monday was a flop. He said very little that was concrete, and introduced a lot of irrelevant matters from the thesis on Seder Eliyahu he has been working on the last few years. I think his wife, Evelyn Garfiel is largely to blame for his acting that way. She is in some respects abler than he is and has her doctorate. She naturally wants to feel she has married a great man and so she forces him to act unnaturally.

I have a peculiar knack for going into ecstasies about people, books, plays, essays and then upon second thought discovering that I had overlooked flagrant defects in the objects of my admiration. Then I go through the painful process of watching their deflation. This

is what happened to me also at the convention. Eugne Kohn read a paper on the Liturgy of the Synagogue. It was far above the usual kind of stuff one hears at these conventions. It dealt frankly with the subject of prayer from a psychological standpoint. I was so elated by its contents that as I discussed it some of its most flagrant shortcomings escaped me. I wish I could profit once by these mistakes in judgment and not be precipatate in my admirations. That trait too is probably the result of a sense of inferiority. The only way to cure myself of it, I suppose, is to accomplish a few things that will increase my self-confidence.

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Monday, August 3, 1931

During the greater part of the time between July ~~5~~ 15 to 28 I worked on a paper for the volume of essays which I want to get out with Eisenstein's help this coming winter. The paper is an attempt to justify the substitution of wants for beliefs as a criterion of loyalty to Judaism. Almost inadvertantly the discussion led me into a critique of Leopold Low's, Schechter's and Neumark's treatment of the question of dogma as in Judaism, and before I realized it I sensed in Mendelssohn's dictum that Judaism knows no dogmas a foreshadowing of the reconstruction I am suggesting.

I have been quite impressed by some of the letters I received from students and friends of the Friedlaender Classes. It seems that those classes have helped to keep alive the Jewishness of a number of young people who otherwise would have become entirely estranged. I am therefore extremely anxious to prevent the liquidation of the classes and I want to build up a supporting clientelle consisting of young people who have established themselves in life. My plan is to get a young man like James Marshall to head such an organization. I went to see him on Tuesday July 21 at 2:30 P.M.

I no sooner presented the matter to him than he posed the question what I meant by Jewish life for which the young people were to be trained. He could understand what was meant by Jewish life in Palestine but he could not picture Jewish life in this country. I found myself in the uncomfortable position of having to refer to my program which calls for a reconstruction of Judaism and to explain within the few minutes at my disposal just how I visualized Jewish life in America. When one comes to these men with an idea and with the request for their assistance one is in the position of a commander besieging a fortress. It is a case of having to break down one defense after another which these men put up in their effort to protect themselves against capture. James Marshall's last defense was preoccupation with other duties. It is true that the Republican Party is trying to put some work on him. His late father's reputation renders him an asset in public affairs. That is why I am after him to head a movement for Jewish young people's educational movement. He promised to think about what I spoke to him and to let me know after his return from the vacation how he felt about it.

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Tuesday, August 11, 1931, Camp Achvah, Arverne Beach 69 St.

After concluding the first draft of the paper on the new criterion of Jewish loyalty I began to think what next to work on. The apprehension that all my efforts to revitalize or to reconstruct Jewish life in this country are merely attempts to ward off the inevitable submergence of Judaism by the rising tide of American life an apprehension which is only too apt to be confirmed by the growing economic and moral deficit in every one of the Jewish institutions, leads me time and again to believe that I ought to bring to bear on the problem of the future of American life all the thinking I have done on the problem of Judaism. Some of the conclusions I have ar-

rived at with regard to the various aspects of social life and to the relation of religion to them ought to enable me to add an illuminating opinion or two to the discussion concerning what ought to be the trend of American civilization. There is no reason to believe that much good can come of a planless American civilization. There is, undoubtedly, much being written about the several main phases of collective life and endeavor in this country. Most of the worthwhile contributions, however, consist of a criticism of the status quo. The little that is of a constructive character usually confines itself to some specific phase and does not proceed from a philosophy of American life as a whole. The lack of such a philosophy is especially felt in the educational work that is being done in this country. John Dewey, to be sure, has laid the foundation for such a philosophy, but much more than a foundation is necessary to render a philosophy livable.

I happened to come across these days a book that fanned in me the ambition to formulate a philosophy of American life as a program on which to base a system of education. That book was the American Road to Culture by George S. Counts. The book itself is disappointingly thin and inadequate. It is surprising how people of such prominent standing in the educational world like Counts permit themselves to handle so vast a theme in the limited and superficial fashion which marks his treatment of it. All that he attempts to prove is that American education is carried on helter skelter and that it is in need of an underlying philosophy. He doesn't even mention Dewey's work in that direction.

But my enthusiasm for undertaking a formulation of a philosophy of American life began to subside the moment I started reading on the very first problem that I would have to deal with, the nature of the economic order but calculated to promote the good life. The ideal thing would probably be a kind of encyclopedia symposium which would

be participated in by a group of people who have made a special study of the several phases of social life and who would be gotten to organize their ideas on their several specialities in accordance with some specific philosophy of American life. To set forth this very thesis would be very much worthwhile.

After all, however, my whole being is too much identified with Jewish life for me to accept the present demoralization as final proof of its ultimate demise. Consequently the very ideas that have been gestating in my mind as part of the philosophy of Americanism assume a new interest for me when I begin to see in them potential material for Jewish education. Why should not Jewish education in this country enlarge its program to include the philosophy of American life? To illustrate, let us say that a philosophy of American life would involve accepting such ideals as an economic order in which there was a just distribution of wealth, or the elimination of private profit, an international consciousness which would necessitate the abolition of war and a greater measure of both individual and group freedom within the nation itself. Why should not these very ideals be made part of the curriculum of the Jewish school, by taking up the subject matter taught in the public schools criticising it from the point of view of these ideals approving whatever is in keeping with them, and disapproving whatever runs counter to them?

Whichever of the two preceding goals I would adopt I would have to enter upon a long drawn out process of reading, thinking and writing for which I need much more time than I see ahead of me at present. I therefore fell back upon a piece of work in which I can see more immediate results, the editing of the Midrash Shir Ha-Shirim. My plan is to follow Dr. Israel Davidson's advice of working out on cards a sort of eclectic text based upon the readings of the different manuscripts. At the rate at which I have been copying it would take me

about 250 hours to complete the entire text of Shir Ha-shirim.Rabba. The prospect however of going on with the critical apparatus and discussion of parallel texts does not altogether regale me. But I don't want to think so far ahead. Let me at least finish the text itself.

Yesterday I arrived here at Camp Achvah at 6:00 P.M. I had intended to get here earlier in the day but I had to officiate during the afternoon at a funeral of a brother-in-law of Herbert Golden. I accepted the invitation to officiate with the understanding that I would not be expected to deliver any eulogy since I had not known his brother-in-law, and I succeeded in living up to my resolve.

So far I have found my stay at the camp both interesting and profitable. If I may describe myself as feeling most of the time like a run down battery, association with Dr. Benderly makes me feel like a battery that is recharged. When I am in his ~~xxx~~ presence for any length of time I absorb some of the dynamism of his personality and my determination to keep on working and fighting for the rehabilitation of Jewish life is revived. I realized only yesterday that I was not as quick in learning as I had imagined. In spite of the many conversations that Dr. B. and I have had about this camp, it has at last dawned upon me what he is aiming at with the camp. Having found that he cannot possibly build up any large scale institution that might transform or Judaize the life of the American Jew he has decided to transplant as it were his hopes and ideals into the innermost consciousness of a group of about forty or fifty young people and to make of them the nuclear of a creative communal Jewish life in this country. I regret that I have allowed myself to be influenced by the derogatory statements made about his work by Dinin and some of the members of the Teachers Institute faculty. A man of his calibre should not be measured

by the standards of unimaginative pedagogues. Such iron will, such tireless application, such endurance in the face of the most heartbreaking isolation and misunderstanding are conceivable only as an expression of moral genius.

The principle on which he operates in training these young people is that the only way to influence young people is to live with them so that one may get to know them intimately and to supplement this contact with them by personal instruction. At the supper table yesterday he gave me an outline of the talks that he has been giving the group which he has been training these three, four years. In those talks he approached the problem of Judaism from the same point of view as I have been advocating. This fact led to our discussing the question of publishing my "Judaism as a Civilization." He was of the opinion that I ought to write a 200 or 250 page resume of the book in a vigorous and passionate style that would appeal to the average reader.

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Wednesday, August 12, 1931

Yesterday morning I visited the group known as Kvuzah or graduating group while they were being taught by Mr. Sachs. There are about 14 or 15 young people ranging from about the ages of 20 to 22, three of whom were young women, were discussing the source material on the karaites, which Sachs had prepared for them. I am sure that in none of the rabbinical seminaries is a lesson the karaites presented in so effective a fashion, to say nothing of the fact that in none of them could the students discuss the subject matter in such fluent Hebrew as these young people did. This only goes to show that all the prompous bluster which these rabbinical institutions make about scholarship is mere bunk.

After these young people were through with Sachs they gathered in the living room of the house in which I was stopping during my stay here for the purpose of putting questions to me which they have been wanting to ask me. Among the talks that Benderly has been giving them he evidently impressed them with the fact that outside of Cronbach in Cincinnati I was the only one among all the members of the rabbinical seminary faculties who was giving serious thought to the problem of Judaism. For almost two hours they plied me with questions, that is to say, the questions were comparatively few, but they were so comprehensive and fundamental that it took me the greater part of that time to answer. The discussion was entirely in Hebrew and I managed to speak with ease and to find the exact expressions for what I wanted to say. Dr. Benderly introduced the discussion by summarizing the main idea of the talks he had been giving them and he asked me to critixize his presentation. I took up what he had said about modernism as essentially the evolutionary outlook and pointed out that it was rather the greater reliance upon human reason or intelligence as the only source of the knowledge we are to live by. I then dwelt upon the change in the conception of God which necessitated that we identify Him with the forces in nature and in the human mind rather than as a disparate individuality outside of the universe. I enjoyed the experience of meeting these young people and contributing to their spiritual self-adjustment as Jews. I met them for a second time today and I discussed further some of the implications of the conception of Judaism as a civilization and of the place of religion in it.

The theory upon which Benderly works is that it is futile to expect the bulk of American Jewry to survive the forces of assimilation in this country. The method of procedure in trying to keep Judaism alive should be to work with those who by nature have the capacity and the will to live as modern Jews. He gives the follow-

ing analogy to drive this point home. Ten people have been saved from a sinking ship as they were on the point of drowning. There is only one physician to try to revive them. If the physician begins with those who show no signs of life he is liable to destroy the chances for life of the one or two who still breathe somewhat. The right way therefore is to begin with those who show sings of life. Only after they have been fully resuscitated should he undertake to save the rest.

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Thursday, August 13, 1931, Returned to West End at 4:00 P.M.

Yesterday morning we got a talking about the wild fanaticism of some of our recent forbears. He then told me about his early life in Safed. It was dangerous he said for a young boy to be caught studying the prophetic books of the Bible. The study of Hebrew grammar exposed one to excommunication. But I got the shock of my life when he told me of what had happened to him personally. Until his fourteenth year he fell in with the extreme religiosity of his surroundings. He would put on two pair of tephillin during the recital of his morning prayers. He read the Zohar as an exercise in piety and he was zealous and punctilious in the performance of all the religious rites. But when he got to be fourteen years old he began to grow discontented with the restrictions placed upon him by the religious regimen of his environment. He became acquainted with the physician who offered to teach him English. He couldn't think of taking advantage of this offer with the knowledge of his folks. To escape their vigilance he would set out about eleven or twelve at night after everyone had gone to bed, to the house of the physician where he would get his lesson in English. Finally, however, he was detected. The members of his family which is noted for some of its pietists considered his action as a blot upon their reputation and took counsel what to do with him.

His father happened to be away at the time in Russia, to settle some quarrel which had arisen among the different groups in Safed concerning their respective shares of the moneys for charity purposes that had arrived from abroad. His mother, however, was allowed to participate in the confab at which his family sat in judgment to decide how to punish him for his impious attempt to learn a gentile language. The decision they finally arrived at was to put him to death by poisoning. It was only when they were about to put their decision into effect that his mother weakened and warded off his death. He was apprised of these facts a long time after.

I haven't the least doubt that if Judaism had not come in contact with the civilizing influences of what is best in Hellenism it would have degenerated into genuine barbarism. At the heart of Judaism is a powerful elemental urge which, when undirected and untamed by the guiding intelligence which the Greek thinkers and artists have been the first display, is only too liable to enter upon the devastating career of brutal superstition. On the other hand, if there should arise a generation of Jews who would succeed in achieving a thoroughgoing synthesis between this elemental force that inheres in Judaism and the best that inheres in Hellenism the world would behold a new spiritual energy being generated whereby humanity would at last learn the secret of seeing life steadily, whole and holy. It is this ambition that I would have the Jews cherish in their effort to make of Palestine the spiritual center of their life as Jews. Historic destiny offers them the opportunity of creating a civilization in which East and West not only meet but become one. Are there enough Jews to understand this opportunity and to seize it?

I met the third year Kvuzah for a second time yesterday morning, all the Kvuzot last night and the third year Kvuzah for a third

time this morning. In the discussion last night I developed the meaning of Zionism as an answer to the twofold challenge to the Jew of Enlightenment and Emancipation. Benderly was present at all the discussions and by his questioning helped to bring out questions from the students, and made it possible for me to elaborate on some of the ideas I hold with regard to Jewish life. All told the three day stay at the Achvah Camp has strengthened my determination to keep on fighting for the reconstruction of Jewish life.

Friday, August 14, 1931

It appears to me that, if educators were to take seriously what they are constantly saying about education being a means of changing the social institutions insofar as they are preventive of peace and progress, they would urge as essential to any curriculum the inclusion of courses for the purpose of passing under review the existing institutions, pointing out their shortcomings and suggesting ways out. Courses in Social Criticism and reconstruction ought to form an integral part of a person's education from his adolescent years on. It ought to deal with the distribution of wealth, industrial conflicts, national conflicts, racial injustice, the art of government, etc. The spirit underlying the courses would be that social life has reached a point where it is no longer possible to conduct our activities without deliberate and intelligent reconstruction of the ideology and social institutions by which we are governed. It is by no means necessary to represent the evils that inhere in the present social order as the creation of irredeemable malice and corruption. Almost all of it is traceable to fear, insecurity and to ignorance of how much man could do to improve the conditions of life. I should like to work out some concrete plan of instruction in Social Criticism and Reconstruction, which might be used in some of the more progressive high schools and

colleges. That kind of instruction if made part of the religious school curriculum would give the religious school the raison d'etre which it lacks at present. This is the only way to substitute social evolution for social revolution, or to make revolution itself bloodless.

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Sunday, August 16, 1931 (p.154 for Hebrew note)

I do not see how it is possible to continue the prohibition of handling the pen on the Sabbath. Although I have abrogated for myself that prohibition I handle the pen only when unseen ( ). Incidentally it is an interesting fact that Jewish ritual law makes a distinction between flagrant and secret transgression, regarding the former as far more reprehensible. I suppose it is the tendency of all law to lay stress on outward conformity rather than on inner consent. Sumptuary laws are not bothered by the moral evil of hypocricy. On the other hand, insofar as they frankly differentiate between flagrant and secret transgression they remove the very quality of hypocrisy from secret transgression.

I mention that prohibition because I was unbearably irked yesterday on account of my not being able to put pen to paper to make note of the various thoughts that were crowding into my mind with regard to the new educational project. There are probably difficulties in the realization of the project of which I am at present blissfully ignorant, but in the meantime I am very much excited by the possibilities I vision. I was all the more stimulated yesterday when I read Owen D. Young's speech in the Times where he points out to the graduates of some summer school that one of the fundamental requisites to an ordered life is acquaintance with the machinery of society. That term "the machinery of society" helped to crystallize what I have been trying to express. It is remarkable what a stimulating effect is exercised by a happy expression. The right word is a call

to action. I was further confirmed in my belief that the time is ripe for such an educational project by an article on education in the current issue of the New Republic. The very character of the other articles in that number of the N.R. dealing with political corruption and business graft assumed a new significance for me. I saw in them the kind of material that ought to form part of the new curriculum.

This project has gotten such possession of me that every time I woke up during the night my mind started working out various ways of going at it. The following is the point to which I have gotten so far in my thinking on the subject:

1) The objectives of the study of social machinery should be to learn what each of us can do to increase the measure of plenty, peace and freedom in the world.

2) In such a study we have to reckon with the factors in human nature which create the problem and the factors which hold out the promise of solving it. Offhand I would say that the factors which create the problem are fear, food hunger, sex hunger and inertia. I do not think it is necessary to make separate items of greed, love of power because these I believe are largely the outcome of fear in one form or another. This idea is of course by no means final with me. Among the factors to be depended on for the solution of the problem are the tendencies to socialization, reason, good will, etc.

3) The third part would deal with social institutions or machinery with a view to reconstructing them so that the objectives of plenty, peace and freedom shall be more fully realized through them than at present.

One of the most fruitufl ideas I have learned from John Dewey, to whom, by the way I feel indebted for the method I employ in my thinking, is that education is only another name for the continuous reconstruction of experience. What we call social machinery exists largely

as experience in the minds of individual human beings. Reconstructing social machinery is therefore the most comprehensive and socialized form of education. After all that Dewey has written I still see that prominent educators (e.g. Allport in the last report of the Conference on the Education of Character) still speaks of education as adjustment The fact is that adjustment to the society into which one is born is a matter of instinct; it is readjustment or more correctly reconstruction of self plus society that is or should be a matter of education.

The social machinery which is forever in need of reconstruction consists of property, labor, exchange, government, religion. It is superfluous to add that these are only different phases of the same machinery and that they are integral to one another.

How far even some of the most enlightened people are at present from holding the proper conception of society's responsibilities to its constituent members -- whether groups or individuals -- is illustrated by the following story which in some form is always quoted approvingly. "A student was securing a part of his support by taking pay for political activities that were questionable. In defnese of his conduct he remarked to a professor of economics, 'One has to live, you know.' The professor replied 'I deny your assumption. Nobody has to live.'"

This answer, in my opinion is the height of brutal impudence. The young man was right in implying that since society made it possible for his parents to give him life, it ought to have made provision for enabling him to maintain that life. Are not parents responsible for the maintenance of their children? Society is or should consider itself in a sense more truly the procreators of each individual than the parents. It is society and not the parents that gives to the individual all that makes him human. When, therefore, it

so mismanages itself that millions of able young people have to go around unemployed and hungry it is both derelict and stupid, and the professor who says "Nobody has to live" simply expresses a modern version of "Am I my brother's keeper?"

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Monday, August 17, 1931

Being a tyro in this study of institutions I am naturally doubtful of my clausifications. Instead of the one I arrived at for myself, according to which institutions are to be divided into property, labor, etc. I usually come across the division into economic, political and social. I do not think however the latter division is helpful. It is responsible for the kind of thinking which deals with the social aspect of life as though it were a thing apart from the economic. In my own classification I would have to explain the place of religion in it I would have to make clear that I have reference to folk religion, which involves the existence of social machinery. Folk religion is to be distinguished from personal religion which, like art and science, belongs to the category of individual self-expression, although like them it also is inconceivable without social life and machinery.

The rapidity of the changes taking place in social machinery is so great that a person can notice the effect of those changes in the transformation of his own mentality. It was not so long ago that I passionately longed for alittle place that I could call my own. Although I have not altogether been weaned away from that longing, I would think twice before tying myself down to any home in the city or country. In our general world outlook we no longer reckon with a universe in which stability was glorified (p.156 but with one in which relativity is accepted as a matter of course. That change is reflected in the life of the average person who has transferred his yearning from a family home to a family car.

No change in sentiment could prove a greater blessing than that which ought to be effected in our attitude toward the past. The past is the armory for all the amunition which the reactionaries employ in their war against progress. With such a vested interest in the past as the ruling classes have it will be a long time before it will be possible for mankind to view the past soberly. In the meantime the glorification of the past falls in with deeply rooted sentiments present even in people who claim to be objectively minded.

J. D. Eisenstein paid me a visit yesterday. In spite of his seventy-five years he works daily on his various Thesauri uninterrupted by worries or illness. Having lived all his life in the narrow world of traditional and Orthodox Judaism he cannot be expected to be able to think straight, although he is by no means a fanatic. It seems that the object of his visit was to induce me to accept the Talmud as the basis of Jewish life. The Orthodox accept the Shulhan Aruk, the Reformists recognize no authority. I, as a conservative Jew, he argued, ought to recognize the Talmud as my authority. "Whatever changes or reform you have a mind to introduce," he added, "I can prove to you that you can find a basis for in the Talmud." He even thought he could find a way of getting the testimony of a woman to be accepted in court. But when I asked him how it is possible to find a basis for eliminating the prayers for the restoration of the sacrificial cult he was stumped.

His main assumption in urging the acceptance of the Talmud as authoritative in Jewish life derives from the belief, as he expressed it, that the ancients were more in contact with the supernatural than we were. This, of course, is part of the very mentality which the majority of mankind have had inculcated into them. To idealize the past was the very essence of piety. To lack that trait was to be

impious. I do not mind seeing untutored laymen hold those preconceptions but when I find it in educated people I am exasperated. They necessarily become an element of obstruction by reason of that kind of prejudice.

Last week when Shalom Spiegel called we touched in our discussion on the question of Kabbalah I expressed the belief that it was only a glorified form of magic and a rival of the rising spirit of science. He disagreed radically with this view. Kaballah he said, is essentially a yearning for communion with God. I wish I had thought then of the fact that the reading of the Zohar was regarded as having spiritual potency irrespective of the meaning it conveyed to the reader. Children from the age of ten were required to read it though they did not understand the meaning of a single sentence in it. I learned this fact from three different sources in one week, from Katzowitz's autobiography, from Benderly's account of his own childhood in Safed, and yesterday from J. D. Eisenstein.

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Tuesday, August 18, 1931

Instead of designating the objectives of social machinery as plenty, peace and freedom, I shall designate them as wellbeing, cooperation and self-realization. In the discussion it will be necessary to set forth what the minimum conditions for the attainment of these objectives are in the light of present day circumstances. These objectives constitute the standard of life.

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Wednesday, August 19, 1931

Gershon Ephros, a musician and cantor, whom I have known distantly for a number of years, came to see me today. He lives at 166 Lewis Street, Perth Amboy, N.J. and is cantor of the conservative synagogue in that city. The thought of seeing me occurred to him when he read in the Jewish Daily Bulletin recently about the organization of the Seminary College of Jewish Studies.

He has been working on an anthology of synagogue choral music, and is very much interested in reinstating the traditional "Nusah" which he regards as genuinely Hebraic. The mention of the College of Jewish Studies suggested to him the possibility of introducing there courses for the training of precentors or "Baale Tefilah". Given the proper kind of Jewish background these men might not only function in other ways in the synagogue and school, but help to bring back the traditional music to the synagogue.

He has issued the first volume of the anthology. That covers the service for Rosh Hashanah. The publication of it was made possible by the Board of Trustees of his congregation who contributed $1600 toward the defrayal of ~~what~~ it cost. Our Jews aren't such a bad lot. When they have money they are liberal. If they would only manage to keep that money for a considerable length of time they might even learn to subsidize cultural undertakings. Ephros told me that Temple Emanuel is subsidizing both Achron and Ernest Bloch to work out music for the liturgy. At present all congregations except the wealthiest are in straits and some of them are practically bankrupt. The effect on Jewish educational and cultural work is devastating.

Ephros explained to me that as a result of his studies in conjunction with his anthology he found it necessary to change completely the type of harmonization he employed in his first volume. There he proceeded along the conventional lines. He conformed strictly to the rules of pre-modern harmony employed by the great occidental musicians. That was the type of harmonization used by men like Sulzer and Lewandowski. He discovered, however, that the pre-modern harmony is ill fitted to do justice to the rough hewn accent of Hebraic emotion which naturally calls for the lapidary style in music as well as in poetry. He therefore arranged the

contents of the second volume according to the freer principles of modern harmony. He played and sang for me some of the Nusah" that he worked out for the second volume. Little as I understand music, I could not help recognizing the modern harmony he employed, and noting that it conveyed more truly the emotional background of the selections than the conventional harmony.

In the course of our conversation he mentioned Achron who, he said, had influenced him considerably to work in the new mode. He told me something about Achron himself. Achron began as a musical prodigy. As a child of ten he played before the Czar. But unfortunately he suffered from stage fright that has prevented him from continuing as a virtuoso. He possesses, however, sufficient musical creativity to compensate for his loss of virtuosity. He is one of a group of Jewish musicians who organized themselves before the war in what was then St. Petersburg, to collect and arrange Jewish Folk Music. They were subsidized in this undertaking by Baron Ginzberg.

I wonder if the time will ever come when American Jews will learn to appreciate the value of such cultural undertakings. In the meantime the prospect is quite gloomy.

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Friday, August 21, 1931

Yesterday I attended a board meeting of the SAJ. Seven of the most active directors were present. The meeting was called at my instigation mainly for the purpose of getting the Board to pay salary arears to the SAJ staff who haven't been paid since about the middle of April. The arears amount to about $6,000. From the income which they expect to get from the seats for the High Holidays the first $6,000 must be used to pay the debt recently incurred to pay toward the mortgage. The American Union Bank which the SAJ owes about $6,000 closed recently and the receivers are calling in all debts.

These are only some of the financial troubles facing the SAJ. The possibility of their paying me what they owe me by this time nearly $12,000 is becoming more and more remote. In these days of growing insecurity that is a very respectable amount. I am very much afraid that I shan't see much of the $21,000 that Harry Bachrach, the husband of my niece Vivian, borrowed from me. These $32,000 represent hard earned savings, or three solid years of work. If it weren't for the few pages of writing matter, this journal and the book on Judaism as a Civilization I would have nothing to show for all the toil I have expended. This, though of comparatively little value, is more than the thousands of business men who have slaved away their souls and are now penniless, can show for all that they have labored p.160

When the question of what to do about paying the $6,000 to the bankrupt American Union Bank arose Wachman volunteered to see the man who is now in charge of the Bank in order to have the terms made as light as possible. The president of the Bank was Sam Samuels, a member of the SAJ and husband of the woman who has been active as vice chairman of the women's division. I wish I had the patience to describe that peculiar combination of intellectual climbing, social climbing, genuine desire for the truth of things and a nagging pettiness and miserliness reenforced by abysmal ignorance which go to make up a woman like Mrs. Samuels. And she is among the best of the women associated with the SAJ. When Wachman saw her husband yesterday after the meeting of the Board the latter gave expression to his resentment at my having ignored the financial breakdown he suffered as a result of the closing of his bank. He expected that I would write to him a word of comfort. Wachman at once telephoned to me here in West End about Samuels and politely intimated that I ought to have taken cognizance of the trouble Samuels was in. If I were to let

myself in for the kind of childish attention the members of the SAJ want to get from me I would have no time left for ~~the more universal values of life~~ creative work. After all, what claim have they upon so much of my time? Have they helped me financially or morally? Have they gone out of their way to make the SAJ mean anything in American Jewish life?

Yet they are human beings with feelings and they need the kind of personal interest in their welfare that one in my position ought to give them. I feel remiss in not being their pastor. For that very reason I really ought to sever my connection with them, so that I should not have this defaulting of mine ever on my conscience. But how can I resign without placing both myself and the organization in a worse predicament than either of us is in at present? What I said somewhere above about the perquisiters being a reason for my having to hold on to the SAJ does not do my case justice. Apart from the inner need of being out in the field and grappling with the difficulties which I lecture about in the classroom, and the illusion that a pulpit like that of the SAJ affords me an outlet for self expression I have needed the SAJ for that sense of security without which I would not have been able to do any thinking whatever. It is only the laxity and chaos in the Seminary that makes it possible for me to remain there without an avowed change of religious policy on its part from the time that Sobato Morais founded it to uphold Orthodoxy. Perhaps the fact that I have not published my views in sufficiently extensive form has contributed to my being tolerated. But now that I contemplate publishing my "Judaism as a Civilization" will it be possible for the Seminary to retain me? On the one hand my affiliation with the SAJ may weigh with the Seminary authorities and prevent them from being precipitate in asking for my resignation. On the other hand, in case they do, I would have something at least to fall back upon as a source of income. In the meantime the fact that I

can mentally play off the SAJ and the Seminary against each other gives me the freedom to think out the problem of Jewish life honestly and thoroughly and emancipates me from that spiritual slavery in which practically all my colleagues find themselves.

This spiritual slavery is the main reason for my detesting with every fibre of my being the capitalistic economy. I have been anxious all my life to have an opportunity of communicating my indignation at its injustice, arrogance and stupidity. This Program of Social Justice for which I am now gathering material ought to prove such an opportunity, though, of course, the main purpose is rather to suggest a new, socialized or socialist economy than merely to attack capitalism. If God will grant me strength I shall try to work out this "Program" by lecturing on it on Sunday nights at the SAJ. I shall have Eisenstein do the preaching on Saturday morning. Let him do the shadow boxing while I will engage in real fighting.

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Sunday, August 23, 1931

Charles Cowen and Sigmund Sonnenborn are spending the week-end here in Long Branch. There is no question that Sonnenborn presents in the psalms which he has written the best proof that humanist pantheism is driven to produce its liturgy. The first question people put to you when you tell them that you cannot think of God as a personal being is: "How can you pray?" To give them a theoretic answer involves going into an analysis of prayer and proving to them that the personality of the deity prayed to does not necessarily figure as the main incentive or occasion for prayer. It is the subjective need of the human being which seeks an outlet in prayer. That is the essential fact to be taken into account. The form is entirely secondary. When the psalmist addresses his soul and says

to her p. 162 he is praying no less than when

he addresses God. But despite all the arguments one might advance, doubt will still linger in the mind of the questioner. The only way in which the average person will come to realize that humanist pantheism can no more escape self-expression through prayer than orthodox theism will be when those whose world outlook is pantheistically humanist will create a literature of prayer and psalmody in terms of their world outlook. I say advisedly "create," because I mean inwardly impelled to give expression to prayer and not merely impelled by their calling or worldly interest to work out prayers. This is why the case of Sonnenborn is so (what? I would like to say "frappant" although it is a foreignism, but I am condemned to use the weak term striking) helpful in deciding the issue whether it is natural for one with modernist views to pray.

The remarkable thing about his psalms is that despite their crudity they make their way into your heart. It is probably due, as Cowen puts it, to their being authentic. They abound in such stereotypes as "ideals," "the larger life," "initiative," "creativeness", etc. which float around like dull leaden clouds, but as you read they become lit up with the sunset rays of he calm spirituality which pervades the atmosphere of his psalms, and their very ugliness becomes matter for beauty.

I am in search of authentic prayers that would articulate my wistful yearnings for a sense of at homeness in the world despite its senseless cruelties. The biblical psalms leave me entirely cold. That they have hitherto fascinated religi us mankind only proves religious mankind to have consisted for the most part of self-righteous fanatics suffering from the persecution complex. When you examine the contents of the prayer book which is essentially a praise book, you are disappointed not because it is devoid of petition but because it merely prmmises to praise God without actually praising Him. When

those who wrote the psalms which constitute so large a part of the devotions came to the point of actually saying something meaningful about God, they became inarticulate. As for the liturgists, the most they could do was to dote on their inarticulateness as in the case of p. 163 in which the author spends himself in saying that he can't say anything. The ancients realized that it was stupid to pile up adjectives about God, but they were completely stumped when they tried to use words of action. Outside of the they had very little to add. Among the few things they say in the passage there is one that is today abhorrent to the spiritually minded, namely .

This morning, for example, I was in a mood for prayer. It was impossible for me to turn to the traditional prayerbook. I saw that there was nothing that could appeal to me among the books I had with me, so I picked up the New Republic and began to read an editorial about the Sacco-Vanzetti affair. The editorial concluded with the last words of Vanzetti.

"If it had not been for these things, I might have to live out my life talking at street corners to scorning men. I might have to die, unmarked, unknown, a failure. Now we are not a failure. This is our career and triumph. Never in our life could we hope to do such work for tolerance, for justice, for man's understanding of man as now we do by accident. Our words -- our lives -- lives of a good shoemaker and a poor fish peddler -- all. The last moment belongs to us -- that agony is our triumph."

I seldom prayed so fervently as when I read the foregoing.

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Tuesday, September 1, 1931

There are some people who, when they enter our lives, enlarge our horizon. The world may know little about them, they may be poor

and beset with all kinds of troubles, but if by virtue of some natural gift, power of insight or of will they reveal to us possibilities of human nature, whose existence we have hardly suspected, they are the greatest benefactors we can have. It is in that sense I am grateful for knowing a man like Benderly. There are very few others of whom I can say the same. That probably accounts for the commonplace nature of my own personality. I hunger, as I suppose everyone does, after such radiant and horizon enlarging men and women. Now and then I come in occasional contact with a person of that kind; those are the happiest moments of my life. I felt that way when I first got to know Schneersohn, but the more I learned to know him the more I realized that he was only ten percent genuine and nine percent charlatan. Although my interest in him has cooled off, I still value him for that ten percent. It has enriched my life by revealing to me the kernel of spirituality in Hassidism.

I have now come across another interesting person, a Yiddish writer who has many pen names, but whose authentic name is B. Rivkind. He writes for the radical socialist and anarchist papers. But he is less interested in their economic philosophy than in raising that philosophy to a level of cosmic significance and fostering for it an appropriate expression throuch ceremony and symbol. This interest has apparently brought him back almost full circle to more than a sympathetic appreciation of traditional Judaism. Two peas in a pod could hardly be more alike than he and I in our approach to folk religion and the problem of its self-expression. We both realize the inadequacy of traditional ideas and rites and the shrieking need for a rich and variegated Jewish life which is at present so dull and vacuous.

As I was sitting at my desk yesterday at my house in New York preparing for the discussion of the Holiday sermons ~~which I was to~~

with the Seminary men in the afternoon, I was told that Rivkind was downstairs and wanted to see me. I had come into the house only to consult some books which I needed for my work, and I was not disposed to have any one interrupt me. I was, therefore, prepared to receive him in a surly mood for having come upon me suddenly, but I recalled what a deep impression his first visit a few months ago made upon me and my displeasure subsided.

He is short statured and stoutish; his face is full and flabby; his hair is long, curly and uncombed. He is dressed shabbily because he is probably too poor to dress any better. He talks only Yiddish and readily falls into a ringing high pitched way of speaking.

The object of his visit was to let me know that he had an opportunity of settling in one of the Jewish colonies in Russia and that he might avail himself of that opportunity to help advance the cause of the type of humanist spirituality that is revealed in his writings. He was fully aware that he would be exposing himself to danger by playing as he put it the new kind of "Marano," but the worthwhileness of the achievement, should he succeed, drew him on. His wife is dnagerously ill, but he has the intuition that if he were to go to Russia and carry out his mission her life would be saved. He wanted to know what I thought about it. Apparently if he were able to earn his livelihood here he would be content to carry on his mission among the Yiddish speaking element in this country. I gather this from the fact that he asked me whether I or the Seminary had any work for him. I made it plain to him that neither my backers nor the Seminary were capable of appreciating such service as he might render.

He left with me two articles of his which appeared in the Yiddish Anarchist weekly "Freie Arbeiter Stemme" of Philadelphia in the issuesof August 21, 1931 and August 28, 1931. Those articles

deal with the need of evolving an appropriate ceremonial for funerals and unveilings whereby the death of the individual would be redeemed from meaninglessness by being interpreted in the light of human destiny. I once listened for a whole hour to Felix Adler dealing with the same subject. In comparison with these two articles by Rivkind Adler's lecture was didactic and bourgeois. The article entitled "Mother and Artist" in which he develops the idea that the stimulus to the development of a necrological ceremonial is likely to come from the love of the mother for the child she has lost, and from the skill of the artist to translate into the language of symbol the frustrated hopes she had cherished and the consolations she achieves. He draws his lesson from an actual incident which he describes with such simplicity and power that I could not restrain myself from weeping as I read.

I met a number of seminary students and graduates last Tuesday and yesterday for the purpose of helping them out with their High Holiday sermons. The idea which I suggested to them for the first day of Rosh Hashanah was that we must interpret the present crisis in the world affairs as a demonstration in negative form of the inevitability of God's laws of justice. As a text I suggested the traditional apocalyptic conception according to which the millenium would be presaged by an era of world disaster. I found it difficult to get the men to realize that when it came to the point as to what to do to bring nearer the reign of social justice or the kingdom of God, they were in no position to do morethan suggest in a general way what was desirable. There was an almost unanimous sentiment that the present situation called for nothing less specific than the advocacy of a program like that being carried out at the present time in Russia. I tried to persuade them that all they can hope to do in one sermon is to create a fruitful attitude

toward the whole problem accentuated by the crisis, and to plead for a continuous study of that problem by means of sermons, forums and study circles as an alternative to bloody revolution.

It is my belief that the new social order must not be preached as attainable by any other than pacific means. Pacifism, sincere and aggressive pacifism should not be limited to international war. It should embrace class warfare. By pursuing the tactics advocated by Ghandi, we of the disinherited classes would succeed in leaving all the violence to be committed by the predatory powers, the overt violence as well as the covert, and negate the impression which they have so successfully established in everybody's mind that they are on the defensive.

It is evident that pulpit talks dealing in concrete fashion with the various aspects of social machinery ~~is~~ are absolutely imperative. This is organized religion's opportunity to redeem itself from the charge of being a tool of capitalism.

In the meantime our Jewish religious organizations are breaking up with the rapidity of icebergs suddenly carried into warmer ~~xxxxx~~ climes. The fact that once in three years the High Holidays come in the beginning of September eliminates a considerable income from the synagogue budget on such years; and what is worse, it also serves to wean the Jew away from congregational life. When, as this summer, infantile paralysis adds to the causes for anxiety, our "baale batim" who have young children have an added excuse for not coming to the city. With most of the SAJ members victims of the depression there will be some rough going for the organization during the coming year. At times I feel that I ought to stand by them at all costs. I ought to do that out of appreciation for the many gifts I have received from them, the cost of the

trip to Carlsbad, the piano, the oil portrait of myself, a fine set of dishes, a radio which cost about $450. etc. On the other hand, I could probably serve the cause of Judaism far more effectively by having more time to do literary work. Especially now that Ira Eisenstein is to minister to them, the organization can continue to function without me. On the other hand, I am also weighing the matter from my own standpoint. I want freedom from anxiety as to what might happen in case I publish my book on Judaism. Association with the SAJ gives me a greater sense of independence, because I imagine I could play it off against the Seminary, in case the latter will make trouble for me. This is how I stand at present.

It is very seldom that I come across in the course of my Hebrew readings anything that is strikingly relevant to current needs or problems. The Hebrew content is itself the problem for adjustment and reinterpretation. It possesses very little of an authoritative or historical character that points to the solution. I was, therefore, beside myself with excitement when I came upon Leon de Modena's pseudonomous work which he designated p.167 . Who would ever have imagined that in the beginning of the seventeenth century a Jew would have the clarity of mind to emancipate himself from the traditional prepossessions of Rabbinism and the constructive ability to outline a reasonable program of what Judaism ought to expect of its adherents. It is good to see that there was a Jew who, though he occupied a prominent position in the religious affairs of his community, had the intellectual if not the moral courage to deflate the reputation of the Rabbis. Of course we know better nowadays than to ascribe, as he does, to a desire to exercise dominion over the souls of the Jews, the multiplicity of laws and ordinances whereby the Rabbis surrounded Jewish life. I personally ascribe the legalism

of the Rabbis to a narrowness of mind which unillumined by culture was reenforced by the hostility of the non-Jews with whom their people came in contact. Who knows what great heights of spiritual achievement our people might have attained if the Rabbis in whose hand its destiny rested had been men of culture and wisdom and had done what Modena says they should have done?
(Hebrew p. 168)

But Modena does not content himself with debunking the Rabbis. He gives concrete suggestions which anticipate in many respects some of the ideas I have expressed in my book. With regard to the observance of the Sabbath, for example, he lays down almost the same principle as I do, when he says

Mind you, this was written in 1628.

All this goes to show the wholesome effect of occidental culture upon the Jewish mind. Like Azariah di Rossi, Modena displays the influence of the Renaissance of Learning upon the Jews who were in a position to benefit by it. Thanks to that influence he emancipated himself -- only in the innermost sanctuary of his own mind, of course -- from the traditional assumption that Moses wrote down the Torah at

the dictation of God. Hardly permitting himself to state specifically that Ezra was really responsible for the Pentateuch in its present form, he hints it unmistakably in the following:

Had Modena aired any of these views as his own he would probably have been gotten out of the way. It is a wonder that he did not go insane as a consequence of his having to exercise sufficient self-control and to supress his beliefs to such a degree as to have rendered him acceptable to the Jewish community of his day. This little treatise must have acted as a much needed safety valve.

I wish some one would take the time to work out a characterization of Modena and point out wherein he adumbrated some of the most modern views in Judaism. Incidentally, it would be an excellent idea to have an entire series of monographs dealing with the struggle of liberal ideas to find a place in Jewish life, something analogous to Lecky's work.

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Wednesday, September 2, 1931

I have made another discovery. Bellamy's "Looking Backdward." I doubt whether I would have come to read it at all if it weren't for my being at work just now on the question of "Social Justice." My attention was called to it by a review of it by Mumford in the New Republic on the occasion of its appearance in a new edition. Under ordinary circumstances I would probably have felt that I got out of the book all that I needed by reading the review, or even if I had ordered the book, it would have stood on one of the bookcases in my study, wrapped in the blurb until some new books would have displaced it. I don't know what to deplore first, the fact that a book of that

kind did not come into my life many years ago when it might have aroused in me a keen intellectual interest in the possibility of reconstructing our social order, or that my circumstances did not permit such interest to be aroused sooner thereby keeping me in ignorance of the book all these years. But rather than wasting any thought on vain regrets let me be grateful that the book has at last gravitated toward me. It made me tingle with joy at finding a sensible program of social life advocated as realizable without violence and without the elimination of religion.

I cannot, however, avoid drawing a very significant lesson from the fact that a man in my position should not have had occasion to read Bellamy's book until now. I am sure I am not the only one among the clergy who has been thus delinquent. I asked Rabbi Marvin Nathan, who is not overburdened with Hebraic love, and whose intellectual interests are not in the field of Hebrew, whether he read the book, and he answered in the negative. It is evident that every form of intellectual or leisure activity carried on under the present social order is calculated to divert the mind from too close a consideration of the social machinery. When the Socialists or Communists charge the capitalists with employing religion as an opiate to drug the masses into unconsciousness of their own true interests, they overlook the fact that philosophy, amusement and the arts, including literature and music are utilized with infinitely greater effect than religion to distract attention from the problems of social life. The masses are entertained with the radio, the movies, the novels, baseball, golf to an extent that they have no mind left for the understanding even of the economic and political structure of society. A world of true observation and wisdom is packed into Will Rogers' little screed in this morning's Times: "This country," he writes, "is not over the 'cuckoo' stage yet, for every day there is more printed in the papers

about the new and old golf ball than there is on unemployment. When the dimensions of a golf ball is our greatest worry, we still got a long way to go to get back to normal. Five thousand people followed Bobby Jones and watched him watch the golf championship. We ought to get Bobby to sit in Washington and watch it. That might revive interest on our present form of government."

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Thursday, September 3, 1931

I had a sudden attack of hay fever last night. So far I have been free from hay fever at this time of the year. I wouldn't like to be another of the many sufferers whose life is gratuitiously agonized by the invasion of pollens that come from useless vegetation during these weeks. It is enough that I have to go to the physician during five months of the year to get inoculations against the spring pollens. Human life under the most favorable circumstances is one continuous struggle against the infinite number of parasites that besiege it.

It seems a long time since I have been thinking about the conception of God. The only time during this summer I had a chance to discuss the meaning of God was when I visited the Kadushins. I made use of the analogy I had worked out long ago. I compared the God idea to the concept of sovereignty. This still seems to me a fruitful analogy. It furnishes what is tantamount to proof of the reality of God and it explains why mankind has been in the habit of identifying God with some concrete symbol or personification. I would define sovereignty as that in each human being and in their relations to each other (this latter element is very important) which makes for organized society and utilizes organized society for the

highest good of the individual. Before the notion of democracy arose man himself was not in the least aware of sovereignty in this form. Yet his entire life as a human being was sustained by sovereignty which functions through what we now ~~know~~ term symbols. Those symbols were to ancient man the very fact of sovereignty itself. It never occurred to him that the social order was maintained by the forces inherent in every member of society. He was certain that it was the king or chieftain who alone made society and the social order possible. Although man has acquired the ability to sense sovereignty in its true form, he still has to resort to symbols, such as kings, presidents, etc. where the kings and the presidents have no other function than that of being symbols, as is the case in England and France respectively. All except the simple minded are conscious of the symbolic function of these human figureheads. The case with godhood is entirely parallel. The godhood of the world is that quality in each entity and in the relations of all ~~entities~~ entities to each other which makes for an ordered and meaningful world and for the maximum of self fulfillment of each entity. Such godhood is as real as earth and sea and sky. Man, however, was unable until recently to conceive of the world in this fashion and to grasp the reality of this invisible aspect of it. Yet this unrecognized intuition found expression in the multitude of gods that he fashioned or imagined. Yahweh to ancient Israel was an identifiable being who represented to them all that there was of godhood, just as the king represented to the ancient man all that there was of sovereignty. But to the Jews Yahweh began to serve merely as symbol of the fact of godhood. They gradually refrained from pronouncing the name. They themselves accounted for this taboo of the Name in terms of their accustomed thinking. But unbeknown to themselves they were beginning to reckon with the reality of godhood as it inheres in

the world and in man, apart from the symbol which their ancestors identified as the reality of godhood itself.

This analysis makes it just as necessary and as easy for us to use the ancient religious terminology in articulating our sense of godhood as it is necessary and easy for the Englishman to avail himself of the ancient trappings of monarchy in symbolizing the fact of sovereignty.

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Sunday, September 6, 1931

I suppose I should have been working on the text of Shir Hashirim Rabba or reading for the series of talks dealing with the program of social justice. But those are things other people can do as well as I or far better. Just now I prefer to record the interesting hour I spent with myself this morning as I went through the regular series of libations. Yesterday I heard about Arthur Dembitz the fifty seven year old simpleton, finding a true companion in his six year old Eliezer Naphtali who possesses a precocious knowledge of liturgical details. They were both over at my house together with their mother yesterday afternoon and I was convinced that the reports of this companionship between father and child were not exaggerated. It saddened me to think that not a single one of my daughters should have enough in common with me to have made companionship and collaboration with any of them even a remote possibility. One doesn't have to be a freak like Dembitz to be so fortunate. There is Cyrus Adler, for example, whose daughter is of great assistance to him in his research work. In view of the spiritual solitude to which I am condemned I have to make the most of the entertainment and enlightenment I get by cultivating my own company. This is what I did this morning during the hour I spent in the bath room.

I got up this morning later than I do usually at this time of the year. This was due to my having gone to bed late on account of the Selihot services which I attended at the local synagogue at one o'clock last night. The conversation which I carried on with myself during the entire time I was shaving, clipping, bathing and gargling dealt with the impression those services made on me. But before I got into this discussion I glanced over the news of the day during the process of relieving my bowels. There was nothing in the news to get me thinking. The only items that stand out in my mind are Seabury's desire to look into Mayor Walker's investment account and the world court decision of 8 to 7 against the Austro-German economic alliance. The captions given in the summary of the day's news sufficed me. Before I knew it my mind was busy reliving the Selihot episode.

(I wish I had not waited till now to record the feelings and ideas that swept through my mind during that hour. It will scarcely be possible for me to recapture the mood into which I got myself worked up in the course of the self-communing.)

There is something very touching in the ceremony of late night or early morning services. It seems to me that anyone whose soul is not completely callous would naturally respond to the appeal which resides in the very time in which the Selihot services are held. Yet none of my children has the least sensitiveness for that appeal. My Judith, who should have known better, went with her friend Al to Gallagher's at the invitation of Helen Cohen and her friend Nat where they could watch people gamble and drink. Hadassah went out with some of her summer friends to some dancing center where she stayed till long after I came back from services. Naomi and Selma went to the Barons to sleep. At half past twelve, long before it was time to leave, the automobile came to take mother, Lena and me to services. As we went out to get into the car I saw

Judtih and Al standing near it, having just come back from Gallagher's. For a moment I imagined that I had been wrong in condemning Judith for her insensitivity. Why, here she was ready to join us. But the next moment I was disillusioned. She went into the house and I stepped into the automobile. I resented being hurried to what I had expected to be an ordeal instead of an inspiration, all the more so when I learned that my sister-in-law, Celia Baron (whose Yiddish name is Tschipah) had grown impatient the moment it got to be twelve o'clock, and insisted on being taken to Shul. There was I with my mother, my wife, my sister-in-law, her daughter, Harriet, and her husband who was driving the machine. My mother's yiddish name is Hayah. To those who are acquainted with the background of small town Jewish life in Lithuania of a generation ago the name "Hayah" suggests an aggressive fanatical type whose religion has nothing whatever to do with being socially minded. As to my sister-in-law Celia, no name could have been more appropriate than Tschipah which is suggestive of the good and simple Jewish woman that she is, whose only means of self-articulation is "a gezund zimdir." All her culture is summed up in her "Taitsch Humesh." I doubt whether she ever reads a newspaper. She gets all her news about the world from the talk of the men in her household.

It is almost the end of the day. I was interrupted in the writing of the foregoing by a formal visit from Abe Liebovitz, his wife and friends of theirs. They came in their Pierce Arrow. Then Israel Unterberg with his daughter Lillian and her husband in the latter's Ford car. What could we talk about? I started the subject of the ancient pilgrimmages to the Temple. This was my way of taking the Liebovitz's to task for not coming into the city for the Holidays. The conversation then broke up into two parts. The women took up one subject and the men another. We talked about the

American Indians and the Silver Standard and of course the inescapable depression. Every subject was touched lightly because not only did any one of us know what he was trying to talk about, but the laymen weren't even able to think consecutively, so that one of them would interpose a question or make a remark that disorganized the conversation completely.

Incidentally, the Liebovitz's wouldn't have called if it weren't for the gentle rebuke I administered him last week. That was when his mother called me up from New York and was saying something about a memorial stone for her husband. Not being able to make out what she was trying to say, she put Abe on the phone. From him I gathered that he wanted me to send him an inscription for his father's tombstone. I then told him that this was not the way to go about what to him ought to be an important matter, and took him to task for not coming to see me all summer as he had promised to do. This was the occasion of his visit today. After the labored conversation we were having about American Indians and the silver standard just as everybody was getting ready to go he called me aside and told me that there were special conditions attached to the making of his father's tombstone. His father stated definitely in his will that the headstone must not be more than four feet high and four inches thick. I then repeated to Liebovitz that we must have much more leisure at our disposal to discuss such a subject.

In the meantime all that I had planned to write about in that "illumination" which I experienced during my bathroom hour has vanished like a dream. All that I recall is the refrain which ran through my mind as summing up my sense of both hearbreak and disgust left with me after the Selihot service was

Hayah, Tschifie, Lena, Mordecai

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